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WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

BY EDEN E. RECFORD.

Within is brightness. All the room
Is full of faintly-sweet perfume,
The merry music of the dance
Wraps scene and sense in subtle trance,
As up and down, in dizzy whirl,
Swing fair-faced youth and happy girl.
No hint of want or woe is there.
No face shows trace of hopeless care,
As jewels flash, but brighter far
Shine eyes than any jewels are.
So with gay music, laugh and song
The feet-winged moments drift along.

Without, in darkness, and alone,
With bare feet on the icy stone,
While fierce and wild the north wind blows
The frost-chill through her threadbare clothes,
Through lace that hangs the windows wide
Looks in a beggar, hollow-eyed.

Such hungry eyes as hers must touch
The heart not hardened overmuch.
Such was, white lips, such tired feet,
As standing in the dreary street,
She watches youth's light-hearted tread
And craves, poor soul! a crust of bread!

So goes the world. The poor must wait
As beggars at the rich man's gate
And see the happiness within—
Oh, fate! not crueler is sin!
From waste and plenty take and give
The crust that helps the poor to live.

Azhort, the Axman;

OR,

The Secrets of the Ducal Palace.
A ROMANCE OF VENICE.

BY ANTHONY P. MORRIS.

AUTHOR OF "FRANZ, THE FRENCH DETECTIVE,"
"THE MAN OF STEEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE HEADSMAN'S FAMILY.

The home of Azhort, once chief executioner of Venice, was situated at the extreme north-west of that cluster of islands which, in late days, was known as the New Lazaretto.

A square, low, massive stone structure, gray with age, and with the usual—but in this instance most neglected—garden at the rear. It had changed owners repeatedly during and subsequent to that notorious muddle of kingdoms and republics known in history as the League of Cambray, and finally became the castle of one whose vicious and shuddering nature of calling filly sorted with a building gloomy, treacherous and scowling of aspect.

Though some miles distant from the scene of conflict on the Grand Canal, the gondola of Azhort soon arrived at the step-stones of what was known as the "Deathsman's Fort,"—for on the broad, square roof, or rampart, were several pieces of brass cannon that had been captured and placed there at a period of war with the French.

Piero, the pretending gondolier, was well acquainted with the destination, and plied his oar as skilfully as if earnest in the employ of the man whom he hated from the depths of his heart, and swore vengeance upon, for the possible death of Cladius Alburno.

It was fortunate for the intentions of Piero that the ex-chief of executioners had bestowed no special scrutiny upon his new servant—employed that very morn—and more fortunate that, as chance willed, Piero was, in his disguise, in close resemblance to that vagabond. Hence, having made the boat fast to the stairs before the dull-muzzled abode of Azhort, and having entered to the presence of that terrible man's family—Piero following by order—for it was mostly customary that a regularly employed gondolier became also the general servant—there ensued no discovery of the change in attendants which had occurred.

If the home of the deathsmen was darkly forbidding without, its interior was even more strikingly impressive.

Like his gondola, like his somber cape of velvet, the cap he wore, the scowl over his eagle-and-tiger eyes, everything was black, black as the shadow of the earth over an eclipsed moon. Furniture, balustrade, ceilings and walls, even the flooring of mosaic flags, were glossed in darkness, until the beholder could imagine himself in a vast tomb of polished black agate, pervaded by airs of ghostly whispering.

Though wealthy enough to enjoy all comforts of room and convenience, Azhort had his peculiarities and seemed rather fond of confining himself to a single apartment on the lower floor, where he took meals with his family, but invariably slept alone. This apartment was but a few steps from the front entrance, decked profusely with armorial trappings, helmets and plates of knights long dead, and containing the great two-handed sword and broad-bladed ax, with which his relentless arm had dealt the death-blow for many victims supplied by the dread Council of Ten when he was in the zenith of his career as chief executioner.

Straight to this lower chamber he led the way—Piero boldly in the rear—and presently joined his family: wife and son.

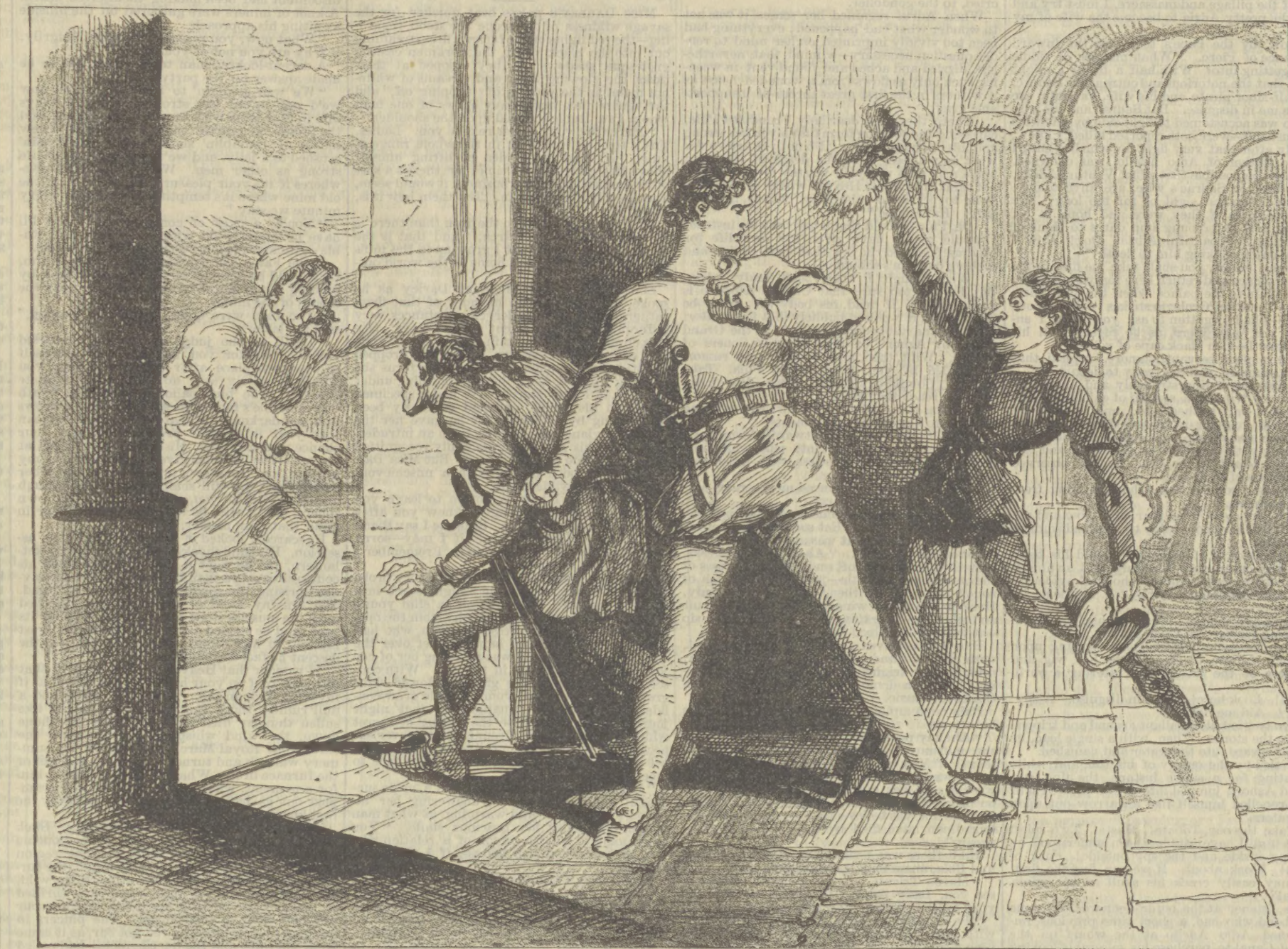
The wife was tall, gaunt, yellow-skinned, having but one eye that was watery and leering; feature and person coarse and awkward; voice that rasped and gurgled in the throat of a long, craning neck; movements those of a woman more masculine of habit than female.

The son, like the father, was dwarfed and ugly, dressed in black, tight, spangled garments, and seated with twisted legs on a high stool of ebony stain. On his head he wore a flimsy conical cap. His nose was long and pointed; mouth broad and narrow, and capable of a dunce-like grin, which, at times, displayed the teeth of a squirrel. His eyes were small, dark and cunning, and in their slightly sunken depths there dwelt a something that warned of a passion not safe to be aroused.

The coffin-hued furnishings, the armorial display, the virago wife, the eely-dwarfed son, all were closely observed by Piero; and when at last he stood fairly within the headsmen's abode, he exclaimed, under his breath:

"By St. George! I have followed the lead of Satan. Here are his favorite imps. I am in a small kingdom of perdition. Poor creature would I have discovered that not a simple gondolier but a lieutenant of the famous Cladius Alburno—whom the executioner hated enough to kill, or try to kill—has dared to enter the infernal home of Azhort, to spy and for vengeance. Fiends, all! they would fly me alive!"

The arrival of the lord of the household was



"Hi! Look here! a man in disguise. A spy! A spy! Aid me, father!"

bailed with a shout from the young dwarf upon the stool, and Bal-Balla, the wife, mumbled some brief words of recognition.

"Supper!" growled Azhort, sending his cap, with a twirl, across to the grasp of his grinning son.

"This ready long since. Any news from the Palazzo Ducale?" answered and asked Bal-Balla.

"Oh! Hi! we have a new man!" squeaked Tobato, the junior dwarf, who had immediately fixed his little eyes on Piero.

"I do not like the glance of that young rascal," passed in the mind of Piero. "It has not the fierceness of his father's, but it is even more prying and may discover that the beard and the wig I wear are false. To be known as a spy here would, undoubtedly, insure my death. Let me be ready." And he cautiously felt in his bosom to see if his stiletto was safely there.

"Let me know you, fine fellow," said the deformed youth, sliding from his stool and advancing like a spider over its silken web. "I am the son of Azhort. My name is Tobato—yours?"

"Piero, bless you, boy; a trusty gondolier, I hope."

"I think I like your looks—Piero—Piero," declared the dwarf, grinning more broadly, casting his snakey eyes first on the head, then on the body, then on the feet, and finally back to the face of Piero, as he repeated the name of that person twice and slowly. "Yes, you tickle my fancy. That great grizzly beard—I always liked big beards, though I cannot grow one myself. Hi! and hair of two colors—black and gray. How very odd! Look, mother: a man with hair of—"

"Cease your chatter, Tobato. Back to your seat—hear!—while I talk with your father. Sit you down in that corner, Rags." The last to Piero, leveling a brown, brawny, hairy arm and claw-of-a-finger toward a distant part of the room.

Piero obeyed silently, keeping covert watch upon the grinning Tobato, whose eyes followed him intently, and whose supple coiled limbs ceased in black reminder of some huge and poisonous spider, surmounted by the head of a clown and the expression of an imp, all ready to spring forward and bite, tear or devour.

A portion of the wig worn by Piero had slipped aside, betraying the true brown color of the hair beneath. By a dextrous movement he adjusted this as he sat down on the box indicated by Bal-Balla.

"When you ask for news," growled Azhort, using the Spanish language, and already munching hungrily at the bounty which Bal-Balla had spread before him—"when you ask for news, let me tell you that I have a plenty of it, which I only gathered this day"—chewing ravenously.

"Listen, and you shall hear."

"You always said that my ears were both big and ugly. Go on with the news you bring," returned Bal-Balla, shortly, standing before him with arms akimbo and staring at him with her watery but steady one eye.

"Hi!" thought Tobato, as he continued his keen survey of Piero. "Hi! that fellow's hair is now all of one color—gray. What has become of the black patch I saw a moment since? I no longer see it."

Piero now transferred his attention to the fierce-looking couple at the table.

"Come, now," he muttered, though in a whisper smothered by his great beard, "there is to

be some news gossip. I would like to hear what manner of news this man of devil's shape is accustomed to bring his family. He speaks in Spanish, and has either forgotten that I am here, or imagines that a poor gondolier has never learned aught but his own beloved dialect. Oh, but I am as good at Spanish, or Italian, or French, or Swiss."

"The Duke d'Ossuna does not want the crown of Naples," abruptly stated Azhort.

"Hoo! what mean you? Was it not for that the Council of Ten—see you and I know—was apprised of the intended revolt?"

"A trick. Bah! Nobles are full of tricks. You cannot swear, by their acts to-day, what they may do on the morrow."

"True enough. What, then, is the duke after?"

"The duke, the marquis and the ambassador—D'Ossuna, De Bedmar and Pedro de Toledo—seek the overthrow of the Republic, and select a time when Venice is in almost open hostility to Spain. It is not the crown of Naples, but the commencing with the pillage of Venice. So much for the sly duke."

"Hoo!" screamed Bal-Balla, excited on the instant. "Hoo! the pillage of Venice. That is it! Then fire—sword!—riot! How gay! I am in! Let us have pillage! Viva! Good for the Duke d'Ossuna! Hoo!"

Bal-Balla rocked from foot to foot, swayed her body back and forth, waved her arms aloft and about, and tossed her head this way and that till its mass of coarse hair loosed and tangled over brow and shoulders, all the while shouting, "Hoo! Hoo!" in a burst of savage glee.

She uttered and shouted the words in the dialect of Venice, and her frenzied behavior and hints at its cause brought on contagion; for catching the spirit of his mother, and delighting in the prospect of fights and plunder, Tobato leaped from his stool and joined her, dancing, grating and contorting his spider shape, till he and the insane virago resembled a pair of hideous demons.

"Hi! Hi!" he yelled. "Oh, good! A riot! Burn and plunder! Hi! We'll drag out the nobles, the senators, and the dogs, and cut off their heads! Hi!" and while he sprang hither and thither, on his elastic toes, he clapped his hands and hallooed with the throat of a screech-owl.

Partaking of the excitement which his announcement created, Azhort bounded from the table to the wall and snatched down his broad-bladed and gleaming ax.

"Ay, pillage and fire!" he cried, hoarsely. "Let me try the weight of my pet ax. So! So! So! Light in darkness! my arm is young yet. So!—and so! Ha!" and round and round his wolfish head he circled the terrible ax like a ring of lightning flashes.

Bal-Balla worked her actions to a pitch of madness; Tobato hopped and skipped. And loud "Hoo! Hoo!" and shrill "Hi! Hi!" filled the chamber with a scene and sound of revelous insanity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO SPIES WORK.

The swift-circling ax, the shuddering glare in the eyes of the ex-chief of executioners and his demoniac countenance of passion; the wild cries and savage gestures of Bal-Balla and Tobato; the din of all and the portrayal of nature

ferely barbaric, was an exhibition that even the pseudo Piero—who had fought many times and bravely amid the terrors of a naval battle—felt a shiver in witnessing.

But for a timely dodge on Piero's part, the first strong sweep of the mighty ax would have completely severed his head; for Azhort, in his impulse of mad enthusiasm, seemed to forget the presence of his gondolier, and his position was near the box, within striking distance of that quite astonished person.

"Hoo!" cried Bal-Balla, as he rolled none too quick from the box and crouched upon the floor. "Now may the winged lion fly away with me from this den! An instant later, and my head would have been rolling under yonder table. Look at them! All mad! All devils! Were I ten times a giant, with the hide of a rhinoceros, I know that I never would leave this house alive did they discover me to be the lieutenant of famous Cladius Alburno."

"Dance, Tobato! Hoo! dance for joy!" screeched the hag.

"Hi! Hi!" squealed Tobato, louder than ever. The miniature pandemonium was only of a few seconds' duration.

"Silence, all!" snarled the hoarse voice of the deathsmen, abruptly slapping back the ax upon its brackets. Instantly there was quietness. Tobato clambered again upon his high stool, and perceiving Piero kneeling and crouching, he giggled in amusement. Bal-Balla set about rearranging her hair and garments, disheveled and disordered during the brief and vociferous orgie.

"Silence, all. I have more news to give you. This pillage and riot in prospect is to occur to-morrow night—"

"The sooner the better," put in Bal-Balla.

"Hi! To-morrow night. Good," supplemented Tobato.

"All Spaniards employed by nobles—and there are many—will attend to those nobles, saving all they can for the ax of Azhort and massacring all who cannot be saved. Hi! I am of the duke's party. Think of it: I will once again be chief executioner of Venice! though I desire it but for one day."

"Hoo! That is excellent! You will be chief!" applauded Bal-Balla.

"Hi! Hi! My father will be chief, and I shall have work in the strangling-chamber! Oil the bowstring! Sharpen sword and ax! Cheer for the Duke d'Ossuna! Hi!" and the impish dwarf swung his black-lighted legs and long, slim arms, laughing loudly, and mother and son were on the verge of another frenzy; but Azhort sternly cried:

"Peace! Bolts and lightning! will you be still! Before this happens, remember that I still go into the Trienti palace, and see if I have not guessed aright the secret Lady Perci has held there for twelve years. 'Twas she who deprived you of your eye, Bal-Balla; she was fiery-tempered and scheming enough, eighteen years ago—to rush upon the deck and jab a lance-point at the first thing she saw; that chancing to be your eye; and she is cunning enough to contrive and carry out what I think she has for twelve years past. Vengeance for you and riches for me will ensue when I have laid bare the secret—a double secret—which must be accomplished before to-morrow night. Ha! fellow, do you understand what I am saying?" to Piero, whose presence he suddenly recalled.

Azhort was still using the language of Spain.

Piero only stared and gaped, as if in dread of the man-fiend, and asked, tremblingly:

"What is your wish, signore?"

"Out! He is too much of an idiot to understand," avowed Bal-Balla, confidently, turning her leering one eye for a second on the dissembling Piero.

"Hi! they think him an idiot," chuckled Tobato, sotto voce; "but I know better. He is a man in disguise, with hair of two colors; and I begin to suspect that the beard he wears is not on right owner's face. Why is he masquerading here? I am watching him."

And Tobato was watching the supposed gondolier with the unwinking keenness of a rat that hides and waits for a chance to dart.

"But how to enter Trienti palace?" was the query of Bal-Balla, "when for nearly the whole of those twelve years you have been striving vainly, and by every artifice, to gain admittance. Hoo! Marco Trienti is anything else than a friend of yours. And you have never told me what secret of hate lies between you."

"None," hissed Azhort, in a tone of anger, and scowling till his brows twisted in black knots over his hawkish nose. "None, except that he despises bloodshed, and those who dabble in it, otherwise than in open warfare. But, despite the order of Marco Trienti, to the contrary, I shall enter the palace this very night. There is a purse of gold"—tossing onto the table the purse he had received in part payment from Lady Perci.

"Hoo! a purse of gold!" echoed the hag.

"Hi! gold! gold!" resounded the dwarf imp.

Mother and son sprung greedily at the purse, tearing it apart and scattering its contents over the table top.

"That in part for having stabbed and drowned Cladius Alburno in the Grand Canal. I cannot be sure that I stabbed him, for, strangely, there is no blood on my knife. But he is drowned, to a certainty."

"So, I had forgotten," entered Piero's mind. "My beloved commander Captain Cladius, this very day put on a jacket of mail in fear of a knife-thrust from the skulking spies of the Ten. As he is a very good swimmer, he may be still alive to have his own vengeance on this man with a wolf's head."

"And," continued Azhort, "I am to get another purse at the palace, in completion of the bargain with Lady Perci, for it was to oblige her I did the deed. Have no doubt as to my being admitted. Look: this is the signet ring of Lady Perci Trienti. None dare dispute it!" and he held aloft the stolen ring that shone, in the light of the many candles that illuminated the room, like a sparkling star.

"The signet ring of Lady Perci!" exclaimed the two. And Bal-Balla: "I will not waste time to ask how you came by it, but—hoo!—by the power of that ring, then, you can find Venturi Adello, and from Venturi Adello you can learn where to seek for the chest of treasure we could not capture at a time when you and I bore other names, and in that fight on board the *Unita*, when Lady Perci spared my eye out. Hoo! Good! The treasure of Venturi Adello, first; then the head of Lady Perci!"

"What can they mean?" wondered the attentive Piero. "They speak of finding Venturi Adello, who, I have heard, was knocked overboard and drowned in the Adriatic, during a terrific battle against Sadrac, the half-Moor pirate, eighteen years ago. His dead body they must speak of. Come, how can the dead body

—if it has been found—have anything to do with the discovery of a treasure? These beasts are mysterious, as well as devilish."

"Hi! His money and vengeance! A good day's work for my smart father!" cried Tobo, sidling again to his high stool, after having pocketed a goodly share of the coin from the purse.

"Hark ye," said Azhort, with a serious frown: "if Venturi Adello will deal with me, I will free him. We will share the treasure together. There are millions in precious stones for both. Ho! then for the pillage of Venice! and after the pillage, the sea—the wide, free sea! The ship, the breeze, my hundred good men of Barbary, and Sadrae once more on the pirate's deck! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ho! And I—the Fazio of old—with cut-throat hands will be brave at your side!"

"Hi! yes, the sea. A very good pirate I think I shall make," chimed in Tobo. "But I must have a bride. Give me Adria Trienti for my bride and queen, for I have long loved her!"

Tobo had no recollection of being on the sea; he was too young at a time when his parents lived entirely upon it and piled a nefarious trade, as will be developed duly.

"Very true," agreed the headman, eying his son with dierish pride. "It is a famous deed. Out of the pillage and massacre, I must try and save the pretty Adria to become the wife of my boy."

"Now, by the Pope's toe!" was the inward utterance of Piero. "What manner of riddle am I getting into? With half a brain I might judge that the notorious and outrageous Sadrae, the half-Moor pirate, and his wife, Fazio, are before me in disguise. But Sadrae and his wife—who was accustomed to fight side by side with her husband—were both reported killed, I know, shortly after that very fight in which Venturi Adello, father of Adio Adello, was drowned. It cannot be possible that either Venturi Adello, or Sadrae, or Sadrae's wife, are alive to-day. All have been lost sight of for too long. Yet they speak as if they were, and hope to be pirates; and that young imp dares to think of abducting the beautiful Adria. Dog! How I should enjoy choking him to death!"

"Come, fellow, you shall take me first to the Trienti palace and return here for my supper. Come again to the palace when the town hammer of Torre del Orologio strikes twelve. Your name!—I had forgotten to ask you when I engaged you"—to Piero, as he replaced on his shoulders the rich black cape of velvet.

"Piero, your name," replied that person, humbly, making ready to depart.

Tobo was acting strangely and excitedly. The family trio had a system of choreography comprehensive only to themselves, and in that language the younger dwarf was striving to communicate something to his father. But he was busy with the dishes at the table and Azhort was adjusting his cap. Neither observed the motions of their son.

"Follow," commanded Azhort, striding from the apartment.

Piero kept close in the rear, and close and unnoticed by Piero noiselessly tiptoed and squirmed Tobo.

As the ex-chief of executioners laid his hand upon the outer door suddenly and swung it open with a jerk, a man, who had evidently been eavesdropping, nearly fell headlong inward.

"Guns and death! What is this?" he cried, bounding forward to grasp the spy.

But in the same instant Tobo sprang upon the back of Piero, tearing off the hat, wig and whiskers of the latter, and uttering a shrill yelp.

"Hi! Look here! a man in disguise. A spy! A spy! Aid me, father!"

Piero twice his assailant around and tripped him on the stones. Then, with a single leap, he dived forward into the water and vanished.

Startled by the outcry of his son, and while hesitating for a single instant, the first spy eluded Azhort, jumped into a two-prowed skiff and propelled himself like an arrow out upon the waters.

"Take the oar, Tobo! Haste! Two spies! What if all I have said has been understood by the spy inside and the spy outside! Fury of earth! Work about it, man, you can find the first, we may easily crack his skull as he swims. Haste!"

The listener at the outer door was the same vagabond who had, a short time previous, impounded Adio Adello at the wharf on the Grand Canal to purchase his miserable-looking dog.

As the black gondola moved about over the now moonlighted waters, in search of Piero, the dull boom of a distant gun came to the ears of father and son.

"Ha! the voice of a bombard," exclaimed Azhort. "I judge it comes from the fortress at Porto di Lido. No matter; it does not concern me. And since we cannot find that spy—death seize him!—why, on, on to the Trienti palace!"

But that dull boom of the gun from Porto di Lido was of very great interest to Azhort, as subsequent events proved.

CHAPTER V.

A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT.

THOUGH well beyond all danger from that collision on the Grand Canal consummated through the inhuman connivance of Lady Perci, the gondola containing Adria continued with unflinching speed toward the curve, where, after running westward, the waters turn to an eastern course; the spot of the disaster happened at about that vicinity.

Feeling, nevertheless, that a sudden and plotted yeil might reach the man of her heart's adoration, her anxious face peered between the curtains, and straining eyes, sparkling with love and fear, were riveted upon the gondola of Cladius.

Behind and above her shoulders was another face, that of a faithful attendant, apparently of Italian extraction, frank of countenance and of muscular build. She had, as it were, reared and watched over Adria since the marriage of Lady Perci with Marco Trienti, twelve years previous.

Cladius, when covered with badges of fame, had twice visited the Trienti palace. Once—the first time—had sufficed to seal the destiny of two hearts upon the chance of happiness or misery enduring; for at the first moment of the meeting of their eyes, gaze to gaze, Cladius had said to himself:

"Here is my fate. Heaven has brought us together."

And Adria:

"This man is to be my king. I know not why, but already I love him."

Knowing Cladius Alborno to be an honorable man and a famous commander in the navy, and attracted, herself, by his noble bearing, the Indian woman, Phla, had encouraged her young mistress in the manner this singularly began for the two responsive hearts were not long in communicating their pure, passionate affection.

It was much owing to the artifice of Phla, who was a shrewd as well as devoted woman, that the clandestine meetings of the lovers were obtained, after the success of the vile plot conceived by Lady Perci, owing to which Cladius was proclaimed a traitor and outlaw by the Ten and sought for with bloodthirsty zeal by the spies of that silent, though stealthy and terrible Council.

Hence, Phla, with great interest, though not so deep nor as keen as Adria's, watched in suspense what she readily perceived—what both felt assured—was a premeditated assault upon Cladius Alborno.

"Oh, Phla! what can it mean? Know you that black gondola with a prow like flashing steel? I have often seen the same before now. See! It is almost on the other, which has scarce time to turn and meet bow to bow. Do you mark?"

"Ay, right well, Lady Adria. Do I know it; and the bow is indeed steel, sharp steel, sharp as a knife. It is the gondola of that most hor-

rible of men, Azhort, once chief executioner of Venice."

"Al! that man of blood. Look, Phla!—look! They meet! They strike! They crash! Oh, Heaven have mercy! Cladius! Cladius!"

For just then the two boats collided, and Adria saw the angry leap of her lover, his brief struggle with a demon shape, the two furious stabs dealt with a blade that gleamed brightly in the setting sun—then Cladius fell and sunk from sight.

A shriek as agonizing as if the knife of Azhort had sheathed itself in her own bosom broke from the parted lips, and with the shriek, and face whiter than the terraced landings around her, she dropped backward, insensible, into the quick arms of Phla.

"There, there, my poor lady!" moaned the woman, still in a daze, herself, at what she had witnessed, and striving to restore Adria to consciousness. "Ah, me! what a death for so noble a warrior as Cladius Alborno. To die by the dagger of an assassin—and such an assassin! There, there, my dear, good babe, my Lady Adria, open your eyes to the dear sun. Look up. Well, it may not be that he is dead, after all."

"Cladius! Cladius!" murmured the now half-unconscious maiden.

"But he may not be dead. Nay, have hope. Straight to the palace and make all haste," she cried, to the gondolier.

When Adria regained her senses, it was not to wonder what had happened; everything had been too vividly imprinted on her mind to render question necessary. And that, nevertheless, less dizzied and ached and found vent in weeping such only as flows from a wounded heart as it withers in the first great throes of insupportable grief.

"There, there, my dear lady," consoled Phla, caressing the sobbing form that lay in her strong and affectionate arms. "Do not yet grieve for what may appear to be the death of the right noble man who was your worthy lover. I cannot think that a just Heaven would permit such as he to perish so miserably. Cheer, my dear lady. Have hope."

"Oh, Phla! would that it had been me instead! I would gladly have given my own life for Cladius!" gasped the lips that were buried and sobbing on Phla's shoulder.

"Well enough, my dear lady, but, be not too sure that Cladius Alborno is dead. Wait. If dead, his body will surely be found when it is noised publicly that the traitor, Cladius, was stabbed and drowned in the Grand Canal by Azhort, ex-chief of executioners of Venice. Wait, then, until we hear such rumor. Be guided by your ever-faithful Phla. Take respite. Compose yourself. I beg, dear lady, until we reach the palace."

"Arriving at the palace, Phla hurried her young mistress to her private apartments, and, as she thought at last outwardly composed, acted like one in a labyrinth who walks mechanically, tired and hopeless, with little risk of whither the end may be.

Alone together Phla evinced most serious concern for her young charges.

"Some refreshment immediately for my dear lady. You are weak. Eat something. Let me change your attire—it was anything to divert the thoughts of Adria. Ah, me! those cheeks, that always blushed and felt and that, as the evening came, needed a little—just a little—touch of rouge. No! Well, then, eat, my dear lady. Here is sparkling wine and ripe, sweet fruit, and other tempting things. A taste, a bite, a sip—it will stir the blood."

But Adria, with the repeat aside and sat, with clasped hands, a very picture of despair, dreaming—a frightful dream—of that glistening blade in a demon hand which had stricken Cladius Alborno.

Phla contemplated her sorrowfully, at a loss how to act.

"Ah! my poor babe, my poor Lady Adria," she murmured, her honest eyes filling with tears. "May all the evil spirits under the earth wreak unending torment on the ugly wretch who has given my mistress this over-whelming fright. Yes, a fright—only a fright, for I do not yet believe that noble Cladius Alborno can have died by the hand of that assassin."

Here there was a summons at the entrance, and Phla, answering it, returned to say:

"Marco Trienti, your step-father, wishes to see you, Lady Adria. Come, let me arrange your toilet before a meeting with him."

"Be expeditious, Phla, for I am anxious to be with him. Though a step-father, he has ever been a father to me, and my love has gone out to him as a daughter's."

"Marco Trienti is a good man, heart and deed," observed Phla, busying herself with the toilet. "Would that I could think the same of his wife."

"Hush, Phla. Remember—she is my mother."

"And," was the woman's mental comment, "a very unmotherly mother. I vow, if she is your mother, which I have doubted for some years." But she kept this thought behind her lips.

The toilet completed, they descended the broad staircase together. Phla had many privileges, owing to her long and faithful service to the household, and in her plain though tidy costume had nearly always remained close to her young mistress, even when the large saloons and corridors were wont to blaze and swim with the light and dazzle of gay entertainments or masquerade, for which the Trienti palace was noted.

Half-way down they met a page ascending.

"Can you tell me whether Lady Perci has returned?" he inquired.

"As well ask me how long since Lady Perci left the palace," replied Phla, with a ready response of the Indian woman. "I am not the keeper of Lady Perci, boy, but the willing slave of Lady Adria."

"Phla, do not be rude," admonished Adria, gently; and she asked, scarce able to account for her impulse: "Tell me, Fauchio, who has come?"

"Azhort, the ex-chief of executioners. He desires an interview with Lady Perci, and cannot be refused because he wears her signet-ring."

At the first announcement, Adria tottered and grasped the balustrade for support, while her large, wondrous, startled eyes followed the page as he continued to ascend the staircase after answering her question.

"Azhort! the murderer! He in the palace!" she gasped. "No!—no! it is scarce possible. What could bring him here, and with the signet-ring of my mother? The murderer of my—Come, Phla! Oh, haste! I shall not feel safe until I am with Marco Trienti, my father."

Phla life seemed suddenly to possess, the maiden, making her fleet of foot, and for the moment flushing cheek and brow. Together they hastened to the apartment where the senator awaited the coming of his step-child; and as they entered his presence, Phla cried out in a spirit of rage:

"Hear, Marco Trienti! The horrible man, Azhort, ex-headman of Venice, is in the palace, when it is well known that you have forbidden his entrance. He is at this moment awaiting an audience with Lady Perci!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 510.)

MAKE home attractive. The children have inalienable rights to amusement as well as instruction. They should be entertained at home. Let there be a generous provision for the physical, mental and moral development of the young at home. There must be a place to play, as well as a place to pray. The children must have fun as well as catechism. To omit either is to do violence to their best interests. If parents would but consider their duty toward their own children, and study ways and means to make them happy at home, by innocent sports, proper books, and, above all, by free companionship and confidence, the church would be honored. Let fathers and mothers think on these things.

A HEART CRY.

BY MARY DE WITT.

Tired of living, weary of woe,
Tired, as tired, oh, no one can know
How weary I am of this world and its show!
Brimful of wickedness, sin and pain,
It pallens the heart and deadens the brain;
Far more of suffering than joy we know—
Tired of living, weary of woe.

Tired of living, weary of woe,
Sunshine falls o'er us never as we go
Through this world's wilderness to and fro.
Hope flies before us just out of sight
Leaving no radiance to brighten our night,
Life is a burden that weighs us so;
Tired of living, weary of woe.

Tired of living, weary of woe,
Merciful God, show pity, oh, show,
That our pathway may brighter and clearer
grow.
Groping in darkness, oh, Father of Grace,
Dispel it, I pray, with the light of Thy face!
Sin hovers over us, dark shadows grow;
Tired of living, weary of woe.

Mill, Mine, and Master.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

MISS DARLEY'S pulses beat quicker for the savage wildness of the scene she stood regarding. The furnace fires streaming down into the black night, the workmen casting grotesque shadows as they stooped at their tasks, the glowing flames and streams of white-hot metal in the process of "tapping off," and the square face and heavy brows of one man who in that mine with the roof all sagging and the pillars cut out till there's no more than a few inches of crumbly slate 'twixt us and the bein' crushed to a jelly, and we've got our love of life strong as other men. We'll go to work elsewhere if it's your pleasure, sir, but not in the disposed toward to try his tempting Providence every minute we stay."

"You're a pack of contrary idiots and I'll have no more to do with you," was Mr. Ruble's gracious response as he pursued his way. "The Fates had combined to aggravate him; they could have taken no surer means than by sending Royal March to confront him near the mouth of the mine."

"The men were quite justified in leaving," said the latter.

"Will be the judge as to that," retorted Ruble. "As for you, sirrah, confine yourself to your own place after this, or I'll send you adrift as surely as I do those insubordinate hounds." The blue pallor of quivering wrath was in Ruble's face as he saw the other's brows knit and darken. "What do I mean? I mean that your intolerable presumption, and your chance meetings with Miss Darley are both at an end. The lady has given her future into my keeping, and if her own pride doesn't check her associations, my will shall kindly control them. Gliding to her side he whispered:

"Come! you look like a ghost. Your guests must not see you in this state. Moreover, he must meet you. It will spill everything."

"Who must not meet me?" asked the woman, vainly fighting her nerves. "Your husband," said Dillingham, without hesitation. A pretty item it would make for the morning papers! Romance in high life!—and all that sort of thing."

"Take me away!" said the woman, helplessly. He put his arm with his head bowed, as if in port, and so got her out of the room without attracting attention, since she was seated near an open window.

On the veranda the cool air revived her a little.

"What excuse will you make for me?" she asked. "Something will be necessary. Paola will seek me at once."

"I will say that you have over-exerted yourself in the dance. Fearing a headache, you have lain down for half an hour," said Paola.

"But what is the use of evading him?" cried Inez, in despair. "He has followed me here to denounce me!"

"Don't be too sure of that," said Dillingham. "He may know nothing of your relationship to Donna Paola. His presence here may be the merest accident. Maybe he would run from you as eagerly as you run from him."

"But discovery is inevitable!"

"Perhaps. In any event he may be induced to keep his mouth shut."

"Will you serve?"

"Willingly; since I go up or down with you."

"Go, then!"

"He went, in time to meet Paola coming up with Harry."

"Mr. Dillingham," she asked, "have you met Mr. Ah! I see," as the gentlemen bowed to each other. "But where is cousin Inez?" she continued. "I left her sitting here."

"She felt oppressed by the heat of the room, and had overdone the 'light fantastic.' I believe," said Dillingham. "She has gone to bed for half an hour."

"Inez has not felt well for two or three days," said Paola, with concern. "Will you excuse me a moment, Mr. Hazeltine, while—"

"Don't trouble yourself," said Dillingham. "I have just come from escorting her to her room. She expressed a wish that you would not attract attention to her withdrawal from the parlors by making it seem of consequence. She will be down again before she is missed."

"Oh! That's settled," Paola said. "I will tell Harry among her friends, she presented him, and his distinguished appearance and polished manners won him immediate acceptance. Then she danced with him, and, for the only time that evening, sung at his request, and later pronounced the remarks on his part."

Every moment brought him more and more under her fascinations, and for a time he yielded himself up to the subtle wifery.

Under the charm of his conversation, and the magnetic influence of his wifery, the girl did not realize how much of her attention she was conferring on this stranger. But there was one who counted the minutes, and measured every smile with jealous vigilance.

Leslie Mansfield was in a painful predicament. A word from Harry could bring upon him the contempt not only of Paola, but of all his friends.

He managed to get our hero out of earshot of others, and said, with a cringing spirit of meanness:

"I did as you asked, feeling that, without asking your reason, I owed you so much for saving my life, and another which is still more to me. But, by my silence, I have put myself in a false position. No one will consider the motive which actuated me, if the truth is now brought to light. For God's sake, do not betray me! Remember, it was your own wish and—"

"But Harry cut him short with a stare of icy contempt."

"You seem to forget the essentials of a gentleman," he said.

"I beg your pardon," said Leslie, with a crestfallen air. "Of course I should have known that the secret was safe."

With a cold bow, Harry turned on his heel and walked away.

"A life which is more to him than his own!" reflected our hero. "The coxcomb! But, pish! she is a woman! The lightness of his heels will make up for the emptiness of his head; and who cares for honor in such a love of a man?"

With this bitter sneer Harry Hazeltine launched gentler sentiments from his mind and returned to his purpose of revenge. This woman had the power to make him forget even the wrongs of his dearest friend; and reflecting on his weakness, he hated her for it—or thought that he did.

Addressing a tailor's dummy to whom he had been presented, he asked:

"Do you know a certain Don Manuel Rubio?"

"Know him?" repeated Charles Augustus. "By Jove, I believe you! A deuce of a fellow! Met his man and ran him through before breakfast this morning! A good appetizer, by Jove! Ha! ha!"

Old aunt Murilda—dead and gone now, so peace to her ashes!—had held it in her hand when she broke out at that denunciation of Paul Ruble, who had gained such an influence over her in her declining age that the poor lady had become little better than the creature of his will.

"He is an evil man, Madeline, a hypocrite and a traitor. You were right in disliking him, and I have been a blind old fool. But we will have justice done yet. The will goes into the fire for one thing, my dear, and we make another one putting you in the place where he never would have been but for his base and unwarranted pretensions—never, believe me!"

But after all aunt Murilda had died and Paul Ruble came into possession of the controlling interest she had held in mills and mines and Madeline hung the distorted key upon her watch-chain as she thought with a sigh of how differently her life might have turned had her relative's intention only been carried out. Whatever impulse made her take possession of the key, she had no thought of using it to discover her intended husband's secrets. Her opinion of the man was so far from flattering that the less of these which came to her knowledge the better, she thought.

Meanwhile Mr. Ruble was not a little nettled at its loss. He rode away in the afternoon to one of the coal mines from which mutters of discontent had been making themselves heard. A knot of miners were gathered on the hillside awaiting his approach.

"What now, ye rascals!" he asked, angrily. "Why are you not at your work?"

A decent-looking man took off his hat as he made answer for the party.

"We was a-comin' to tell you, sir, as how we'd put in our last strokes. 'Tain't no ways safe in that mine with the roof all sagging and the pillars cut out till there's no more than a few inches of crumbly slate 'twixt us and the bein' crushed to a jelly, and we've got our love of life strong as other men. We'll go to work elsewhere if it's your pleasure, sir, but not in the disposed toward to try his tempting Providence every minute we stay."

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being sound in mind but feeble in body, do hereby devise and bequeath all the estates and personal properties of which I may die possessed to my beloved daughter, Madeline Darley, on condition that she make such restitution as justice demands to the actual inventor of said improvements of which he was wickedly defrauded—said inventor, I have reason to believe, being a young man named Royal March."

That, and more, in aunt Murilda's hand, and a rather awkward imitation of a lawyer's phraseology left her last wishes unmistakably clear, and the choice between Paul Ruble and poverty was lifted away from Madeline, and Mr. Ruble himself recovered to sink out of her knowledge, and, without a doubt, to curse the weakness which left that document understood.

Did she fulfill the condition imposed upon her? There is a crippled joint-owner with her of those mill and mining interests who evidently thinks so, into whose eyes she looks as she says: "You are the only lord and master I could ever acknowledge, Royal, my dear."

The Creole Cousins;

OR,

FALSE AS FAIR.

A Romance of the Tropics.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE,

AUTHOR OF "BOW

"Is he present this evening? I was led to understand that he was a guest of Mr. Wetherby," said Harry, unmoved by the other's pleasantry.

"Oh, but you know it wouldn't be good for me to appear in society on this day after sending a fellow to the Kingdom of Heaven—or the other place!"

"And this lesson in social etiquette was given with a patronizing air that was most exasperating."

"Thank you," said Harry, so gravely that his irony was not perceived.

"Oh, not at all! Rubio played the devil and all with the fair creatures before. After this he'll distance everything on the course."

"No doubt!"

And with set teeth Harry bowed, and passed on.

But while his fury was at its height she met him, and her smile calmed the tempest.

Without rudeness he could not avoid asking her to join in the dance that was just forming. She had courted the invitation, by that subtle contrivance by which a lady may compass her own wishes, and her smile showed her gratification as she accepted it.

After the dance they went out on the cool veranda, and he was once more completely under her spell.

"I am disappointed that you have failed to meet my cousin Inez," she said, after a time. "I have been to see if she could not come down; but she is suffering from a raging headache. I know you will be pleased with her; and I hope soon to present you."

The name of Inez brought up a train of bitter thoughts in the mind of our hero. He determined by one desperate effort to break the spell which this woman wove about him.

"Miss Careno," he said, "I regret that I must leave you. My dearest friend is now perhaps dying, if not already dead, stricken down by the hand of Don Manuel Rubio. I came here to-night with the intent to meet him, force another duel upon him, and kill him! As he is not here, I must seek him elsewhere."

At this the girl turned pale with horror.

"Oh, Mr. Hazeltine, she cried, "you cannot— you must not do so terrible a thing!"

"I can, and will!" he replied, with dogged determination.

But, forgetful of all conventionalities, she caught his hands and detained him, as he was about to leave her, with rapid, eloquent words she denounced dueling as murder.

By his own confession he was seeking the life of a fellow mortal from a spirit of revenge. Did it lessen the crime to add suicide to murder? since he had no right to jeopardize his own life in vain. And what palliation was the fact that human law affixed no penalty, when God's law was so plain?

He was a Northern man, and all the weight of his early education lay with her line of argument. Indeed the project had been born of the spirit of recklessness that possessed him. He sought more desperately to divert him from the fierce struggle that was going on in his breast.

She appealed to him in the name of his mother—of his sisters, if he had any. She told him that Don Manuel was the lover of her cousin, Inez—this cousin who was more than a sister to her. Was he willing to break the heart of one so dear to her?

Lastly, she presented the danger to himself. And here her voice broke down, tears sprung to her eyes, and, clinging to his hands, she begged him to promise that he would desist from his purpose.

In this crisis she who was the personification of modesty forgot maidenly reserve. The trammels of society fell away. That she had known him less than a week lost its significance. It was one soul crying out to another.

Great emotions transcend the rules applicable to the ordinary events of life. Noble natures then soar free. This woman lost nothing of her dignity in being true to the inspiration that was given her.

Harry was thrilled by the magnetism of this direct appeal. He was bewildered by a strange intoxication. How, he scarcely knew; but he gave the promise, and got away from her and out of the house.

Only in the darkness he found himself walking with hurried strides; and there were tears on his cheeks!

He dashed them away, and with set teeth reached his apartments.

Passing Viktor without a glance, he swept aside the curtain and seized the handle of the door. It resisted his fierce wrench. It was locked.

The West Indian braced himself for the crisis that was at hand. His dark skin became a sallow yellow with pallor. He was resolved to defend his master against himself, with his life, if need be.

Then the storm burst!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LOATHSOME FATE.

WHEN Donna Inez retired from the parlors, after seeing her husband enter, she was a prey to fierce alternations of defiance and despair, pacing her room like a caged tigress, now wringing her hands, now clenching them, in one moment feeling as if she had the strength and courage to cope with him in a physical encounter, at the next prostrated by weakness and fear.

Before retiring to rest Paola entered her cousin's room and found her already in bed, the tumbled drapery attesting her restlessness.

After sympathetic inquiry about Inez's indisposition, the girl expressed her regrets that it had prevented her cousin from meeting Mr. Hazeltine, but added the painful hostility of the latter toward Don Manuel. Don Manuel, from which, however, she had dissuaded him.

To this recital Inez listened, lying with her face in shadow. Whatever may have been her emotions, she held them well under control. When it was done, she asked, pointedly:

"How came he to tell you that? Men do not usually babble such matters to women whom they have known scarcely an hour."

Paola blushed.

"I don't know," she said. "It was a sort of apology for taking his departure so early."

Donna Inez then went out to another room, a new crisis. Why had he told this to Paola, and by what power had she dissuaded him?

Inez knew Harry's truthfulness. Having promised Paola, he would keep his word. Could it be true that he sought Don Manuel only to avenge his friend, not knowing that he had other cause for enmity? Then he could not have recognized him.

But might not his failure to recognize Don Manuel imply that he was ignorant of her identity also? Asa Dillingham had suggested this possibility.

Lastly, if he supposed her dead, and himself thus free, what was the significance of Paola's influence over him? For no one knew better than Inez the devoted friendship existing between Harry and Ned Taunton. Could he be in love with Paola already?

In any event, this much was certain—the acquaintance with Mr. Hazeltine must go no further.

"Paola," said her cousin, "I know nothing of the excellencies of this gentleman; but his hostility toward Don Manuel is, of course, he an effectual barrier between him and me; and I think I know your heart well enough to feel confident that you cannot remain unpartisan."

"But, Inez, he has given up his enmity," urged Paola.

"Of course you are at liberty to do as you please," said Inez coldly; "but I can never under any circumstances consent to meet him."

The gentle Paola was chilled, and with a depressed heart she sought her own room.

That night was to Donna Inez a night of torment. If Harry loved Paola, and sought her society, the whole scheme must inevitably be defeated.

In the morning the trio of conspirators convened, and Inez said:

"The time for concealment is past. Thomas Kittridge, alias James Wetherby, the man whom you have last introduced into the bosom of your family, is my husband! Imagine the effect of this announcement upon my dear, confiding cousin, Paola. But these two have met, and, my word for it, are in love with each other, or will be, if further meeting is not prevented."

"Thomas Kittridge, alias James Wetherby, can you retrieve the blunder you have made?" "She shall leave the city to-morrow," said her cousin, wincing under her iteration of his true name.

"Not so," objected Inez. "When she leaves the city, it must be in company with Leslie Mansfield, with a view to marrying him."

"Curse Leslie Mansfield!" growled Asa Dillingham, with an ugly scowl.

"Elo! what's the matter with you?" asked Wetherby, while Inez stared in surprise.

"Look here," said Dillingham. "I'm ugly; but I'm flesh and blood; and, demme! I'm in love with this little woman myself."

"The deuce you are!" cried Wetherby.

Inez smiled contemptuously.

"I've got another plan to propose," pursued Dillingham. "Let me have the girl; and we can divide the money just the same."

"A capital plan!" laughed Wetherby.

"Open two or three slight objections, however," added Inez.

"What objections?"

"You rosebud of innocence!" cried Wetherby; "do you think we'd trust such a knave as you? When you 'ad the girl, and through her the title to the money, 'ow nicely you'd set us adrift?"

"With the prospect of your splitting on me?"

"And going to prison for conspiracy, hem-bem-bem-bem, and the Lord knows what all! Oh, no—not for Joe!"

But more than that, it would be impossible to force her into a marriage with you," added Inez. "My dear sir, there is a limit to human endurance. She would appeal to the public for protection."

"Ha! ha! ha! Hit's your beauty, Hana!" laughed Wetherby. "Why, man, if a woman were to marry voluntarily, I say, you would set the contract aside on the ground of insanity?"

Asa Dillingham smiled, putting his clammy fingers to his lips, and his basilisk eyes glittered in very unpleasant fashion. Perhaps he did not forego his purposes.

"Enough of this!" interposed Inez, impatiently. "Mr. Hazeltine must be excluded from the house, and our first plan pushed at once. There is no need of longer delay. Let Paola be notified of what she has to expect to-day."

That afternoon Paola was called into her guardian's presence.

"My dear," began Wetherby, with some nervousness. "I have sent for you on a very important matter—vital, I may say, to your 'ole future."

"To what can you refer?" asked the girl, curiously.

"You are now twenty years of age?"

"Last month."

"Most women are married before that age."

"But I don't want to marry," she said.

"Nevertheless, it would be better for you."

"But I don't love any one."

"A school-girl's notion!—the effect of the license hall'd young people in this country. But fortunately you were born to wiser customs. By the provisions of your father's will I take 'is place in everything; and hacting as I know 'e would 'ave hacted, I 'ave selected a 'usband for you."

"Oh, guardian!"

"In Hingland, as in Spain, and wherever children are left in subjection to their parents or guardians, a light pair of 'eels isn't considered sufficient qualification for a 'usband. I 'ave selected a man with money and social position. None of your fly-aways; but a solid business—one 'oo will give you an establishment of his own."

"Whom, guardian?" asked the girl, breathlessly.

"Hana Dillingham!"

"Asa Dillingham?"

The girl stared, and then burst into a laugh.

"Why, guardian, he said, 'I thought you were in earnest. You look as sober as a judge.'"

"And why shouldn't I be in earnest?" demanded Wetherby, in a tone of dogged severity.

"I don't see hannything to hexcite you to mirth."

"Oh! but Mr. Dillingham!"

"Well, Mr. Dillingham, a man known and 'ighly respected by your mother."

"And therefore altogether too old for me!" said Paola, quickly—"not to add that he isn't handsome."

"And some is 'andsome does! As for haze, holder men 'ave married younger women, and 'appily, too. But, sentiment aside, Mr. Dillingham is a man hevery way worthy of you. 'E 'as proposed to me for your 'and; and is ready to settle twenty thousand pounds sterling on you the day of your marriage. There's no nonsense about twenty thousand pound!"

"But I'd rather not sell myself, even for so high a figure!" Paola persisted.

"My dearest, I 'ave expressed my wishes. Of course I expect obedience. Mr. Dillingham leaves for Hingland six weeks from to-day. I 'ave promised 'im that 'is bride shall be ready for 'im."

"Oh, uncle—"

"No more at present. You will begin your preparations at once. If you will hexcuse me, I will take my hafter-dinner nap."

With white lips and whirling brain Paola left the library, sought her cousin Inez and cast herself weeping into her arms.

It was the bird going to the serpent for protection and sympathy!

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT.

WITH a terrible frown Harry Hazeltine whirled upon his servant.

"What is the meaning of this?" he cried, shaking the door with unreasoning impatience.

"Excelsenza, do you forget that the door is locked in accordance with your orders?"

"Open it at once!"

"Pardon, excelsenza. You charged me to retain the key, no matter what happened, or what you might do."

"Well, I have changed my mind. I revoke the command. Produce the key."

"Still pardon, excelsenza. It is not your better self that speaks now."

"What! Dare you palter with me?"

"You made it a test of my love."

"You refuse to obey me?"

"I must protect you from yourself."

"Slave!" thundered the enraged master.

White with fury he leaped upon the devoted Viktor, clutched him by the throat, dashed him to the floor with one sweep of his powerful arm, and planted a foot on his breast.

The West Indian offered no resistance; but gazing up into his master's face with sorrowing reproach, he said:

"Excelsenza, my life is yours. Take it. And when I am dead, thinking why I did, your nobler self will gain the ascendancy. You will be moved. For me, it is enough to know that Viktor never failed the master he loved, and to whom he owed so much."

At these words—at this devotion, a swift transition took place in Harry's feelings.

Lifting his faithful servant up, he cried, with tears in his eyes:

"Forgive me, Viktor! Your generosity overwhelms me with shame. My friend, you are right. Your devotion shall save me. I will never enter that accursed room again!"

"Excelsenza, again I recognize you!" cried Viktor, his large eyes and covering his master's hand with kisses. "How proud and happy am I that my love prevails!"

"Viktor, it will prevail, if you stand firm."

"Excelsenza, may I ask a favor?"

"Anything, Viktor, after the wrong I have done you."

"Speak not of that, my master. It is for you alone that I think. What you are strong in good resolves, but the temptation forever away from you. Let me enter yonder and destroy the demon!"

Harry hesitated.

"Are you sincere in the purpose you have avowed?"

"Yes, Viktor."

"Then why cling to that which destroys?"

"My faithful friend, my brother, do as you wish!" cried Harry, putting all vacillation resolutely to rest.

"Excelsenza, mi gratias! We shall triumph!" cried Viktor, delightedly.

But good resolves did not lay the demon of unrest which possessed Harry Hazeltine.

A woman—one of the hated and distrusted sex—had seduced him from his loyalty to his friend. More than this, he had to confess to himself that he had not revealed to Viktor, that consideration of her had much to do with his abandonment of that room which the West Indian said contained the curse of his life.

He had been good woman!

He learned that Ned was sleeping.

He found it intolerable to wait in one place, and so set out in the darkness to walk until exhaustion should subdue his excitement.

Alone in the stillness and solitude of the night, he thought of Paola, and of that other who had wrecked his life. And gradually his spirit took on some of the tranquillity of the calm sky.

One thing that Paola had said recurred to his mind. She had appealed to him in the name of his mother, and of his sister, if he had one.

He had pondered how in all his childish griefs he had gone to his mother's breast, as to a sure haven. He recalled the calm, steady light of her eye, her gentle touch, her love that never failed, and last the holy serenity of her face when she died in the hope of immortality. She had been a good woman!

There had been a little sister, too, who used to romp with him. He heard again her childish laugh of rippling music. The memory of her innocent smile shot athwart his mental vision like a ray of sunshine. How quickly, too, had sprung to her eye the sympathetic tear.

And all these things seemed to see their counterpart in Paola. It was as if the spirits of the departed had come back to woo him from his cynicism through her smile.

Oh, if he could trust her! His heart hungered for love—for woman's love. His mother—his sister—they had been true. He could never doubt them. And she was so like them!

But then the image of Inez with her fair seeming rose before his imagination; and dragging his hat over his eyes and clenching his teeth to keep back the bitter tears, he strode on.

So waged the conflict until with the dawn he sought again his friend, and afterward went to his own apartments, to snatch a little sleep.

He noticed a look of suspense on Viktor's face. Opening the door to his sleeping apartment, he stepped out on the threshold.

The curtain was gone. The door to the mysterious chamber stood wide open. The room itself, made cheerful by the morning sunlight streaming in through an open window, now seemed nothing more terrible than easy-chairs, and books and papers and writing materials.

Harry Hazeltine turned pale, and bent upon his servant a look of awakening displeasure.

"Viktor!"

"Excelsenza, you have crossed into the enemy's country, and in the terrible struggle that is at hand you must feel that the bridges are burnt behind you."

In the face of the West Indian there was an impressive blending of humility and firmness.

"Waiting begins about Aug. 4th, and ends the fore part of September, succeeded by the thrashing, with eight steam-thrashers. After thrashing, the stubble-ground is plowed with great plows drawn by three horses and cutting two furrows; and this goes on until the weather is cold enough to freeze, usually about Nov. 1st. There are many other large farms in the Territory and in the neighborhood, and they are tilled in much the same manner as the Groundin. The surface of the land generally is almost level, and is very rich and black. The product of one field of 2,315 acres is 57,285 bushels—Elevators weight—some twenty-five bushels to the acre. The average yield of the Dakota wheat farm is from twenty to twenty-five bushels per acre, and the concurrent testimony is that it is unequalled as a wheat region in the world."

En Passant.

A BOY MARKSMAN.

CAPTAIN BOGARDUS, remarkable as he is as a marksman, is probably to be outdone by his own son, Eugene. At the exhibition of the boy's skill in St. Paul, Minnesota, he proved himself a real prodigy. He is but fourteen years old. A St. Paul paper, speaking of the lad's feat, says: "With his little rifle, resembling more a toy firearm than a death-dealing instrument, he astonished the lookers-on by breaking forty-seven out of fifty glass balls thrown into the air, besides many other odd and difficult feats. When Dr. Carver gave his exhibition at the fair grounds, last season, people looked upon them as remarkable and wonderful. But now comes a mere youth, who, almost with a toy rifle, does equally, if not more, difficult feats. Carver used a large rifle, of which Eugene's is but a miniature copy. Eugene's shooting record yesterday is ahead of anything Dr. Carver has done. Despite a strong wind, he not only showed himself able to break glass balls, but to hit half-dollars, quarters, nickels, and even three-cent pieces. His quick, impetuous, retiring demeanor is also a matter of wonderment. Apparently unconscious of performing any extraordinary feat, he continues to load and fire his little piece, in no way elated at his success. Eugene is certainly a prodigy, and his feat, indeed, astonishes the world with still more remarkable performances in his line."

THE FORTY THOUSAND ACRE FARM.

The largest cultivated wheat farm on the globe is said to be the Groundin farm, not far from the town of Fargo, Dakota. It embraces some 40,000 acres, both Government and private land, and lies close to the Red River. Divided into four parts, it has dwellings, granaries, machine shops, elevators, stables for 200 horses, and room for storing 1,000,000 bushels of grain. Besides the wheat farm there is a stock farm of 20,000 acres. In sowing time seventy to eighty men are employed, and during harvest 250 to 300 men. Seeding begins about April 9th, and continues through the month, and is done very systematically, the machines following one another around the field, some four rods apart. Thinning begins about Aug. 4th, and ends the fore part of September, succeeded by the thrashing, with eight steam-thrashers. After thrashing, the stubble-ground is plowed with great plows drawn by three horses and cutting two furrows; and this goes on until the weather is cold enough to freeze, usually about Nov. 1st. There are many other large farms in the Territory and in the neighborhood, and they are tilled in much the same manner as the Groundin. The surface of the land generally is almost level, and is very rich and black. The product of one field of 2,315 acres is 57,285 bushels—Elevators weight—some twenty-five bushels to the acre. The average yield of the Dakota wheat farm is from twenty to twenty-five bushels per acre, and the concurrent testimony is that it is unequalled as a wheat region in the world.

GIGANTIC KANGAROO.

PROFESSOR COPE of Philadelphia recently gave to the San Francisco Academy a description of two fossil animals. One was an enormous vertebrate somewhat resembling an aquatic kangaroo, named the *comarasaurus* supracaudalis, whose neck measured nine feet in diameter, whose hind legs were twenty feet long, whose spinal vertebrae were fifty-six inches across, and which must have been seventy-two feet long by measurements carefully taken. This animal could walk in forty feet of water and catch its prey with its fore-paws. He also described another similar monster found, whose spinal vertebrae were six feet across and whose hind legs were forty feet long, with cariniferous teeth placed in the upper and lower jaws like shears, so as to cut up animal food, by traversing it in water. This monster has been named *amphicoelias fragilissimus*, and must have been considerably over one hundred feet in length. Both these animals have large and powerful tails like kangaroos, and when catching their food in the water must have appeared as if on three-lobed wheels, the tail acting as an equal support of the tripod.

A LEADVILLE WAGER.

THERE is nothing that cannot be made the subject of a wager. In Leadville men are driven to their wits' end for matters to bet on. *The Herald* of that brand-new city tells of some young men who discussed the question of hanging a fortnight ago, at the mouth of a shaft. One insisted that by holding the head over forward, with the knot directly behind, respiration could be maintained for a quarter of an hour. The others ridiculed the idea. "I'll bet \$5 I can let you haul me up the shaft," said the young man, "with a rope around my neck, and I'll come out alive." The idea was fascinating, the bet was formally made, the money put up, the young athlete suspended under the bucket by the neck and an engine started. The distance was seventy-five feet. The progress seemed to him very slow for about a second, and then he became unconscious. His companions were in the bucket watching the experiment. They put on steam, but by the time the inanimate form reached the surface it presented a horrible appearance. As first it was thought that the young man was dead, but a careful examination of the body convinced a miner of experience that life was not extinct, and a vigorous rubbing, with the additional influence of liquor forced down the throat, had the effect of restoring consciousness in half an hour. He now thinks that hanging a man by the neck will kill him if he hangs long enough. But he won his \$5.

RUSSIAN BRUTALITY.

THE Russian revolutionary journals must make converts wherever they are read, when they relate revolting instances of tyranny such as this. Kabatitschenko, an infirm old man, was summoned before the Burgomaster, and asked if he had brought a balance of certain taxes that were due. He begged for time. "As soon as I have earned something," he added, "I will pay all." "Wait, you old dog," shouted the Burgomaster. "I will find a way of squeezing the money from you." In the twinkling of an eye, two officials seized the trembling old man, bound him to a strong post in the court-yard,

and fastened his arms with ropes to his back, the Burgomaster looking on. "Now, old beast," he cried, to the old man, who was bareheaded and motionless, "will you pay your taxes?" "Christ is my witness," was the reply, "I have not a single copeck." "Then you will remain where you are." "Set me free, for the love of God; my wife and children are famishing at home." "Pay what is due." "Have compassion on my age; I am the laughing-stock of the mob." "Let them laugh, old thief!" "I am fainting," groaned the poor wretch. "My lads, give him a shower bath." The officials obeyed by pouring two cans of cold water upon the fainting man, which restored him to consciousness. "Now unbend him," commanded the tyrant, "and take him for a walk through the streets." This having been done, the Burgomaster ordered him to be fastened to the public pillory, where he was kept for the whole night. One of the old man's children, a girl of thirteen, brought her father a small roll. The police, seizing her, flung her almost to death, and ultimately threw her into prison. The rain then began to fall heavily. Within a fortnight the old man was in his grave.

THE NEW OPIUM.

The mines recently discovered in the Sierra Mojada, Mexico, about which so much has recently been said, were found by a Mexican Lieutenant and squad while in search of Indians. Believing that Indians made their abode in this rough and almost unapproachable region, the lieutenant proceeded to investigate, and came upon several squares and children, and two worn-out warriors, who were congregated about the mouth of a cave molding bullets. The reds were taken in tow, when the cave was searched, and quite a quantity of silver bullets and roughly-made silver articles were found. So astonished was the lieutenant at the discovery of precious metal put to such a common use that he made further search, discovering the very locality at which they obtained the natural ore. Their mining tools consisted principally of two or three old hatchets and axes, with which they dug the loose ore as it clung in short from the mass, to the side of a gigantic mountain. For years, the Indians had visited many Mexican towns, even going as far as Monclova, with cargoes of bullets of pure silver, which they almost gave away. But no one knew, anterior to the discovery made by the Mexican lieutenant, of the above referred to, where they manufactured the bullets. Now the locality is swarming with seekers after wealth and the richest silver discoveries known have there been made.

SEASONABLE!

As the social season is now about to commence, we deem it not inappropriate to lay down some leading axioms to direct certain city people in their social deportment.

As soon as it is rumored that there is to be an entertainment, persons desiring to attend should at once commence skimming for an invitation. If a female, she should call upon the hostess at once; if her cards are out, this should prove no embarrassment. If she has never called before she can make some excuse for the delay; if long in arrears, she must have some adroit apology for the neglect. Male persons can usually obtain the intercession of some gentleman; bring some business or political point to bear, or, when everything else is likely to fail, can brass it out with the direct begging of an invitation; or, if the entertainment is to be a very large one, may push in uninvited.

The invitation having been obtained, it is well to display it as much as possible. Females should communicate the fact to all acquaintances, especially to those who are not invited.

We omit full directions in reference to dress. Ladies will, of course, dress in accordance with their means and in good taste; females will dress in the inverse ratio of their means—i. e., those who have least will endeavor to dress the costliest.

What cannot be had in way of the real may be supplemented by imitation. Palais Royale diamonds are just as attractive to those who do not know the difference as the real article, are not so liable to be stolen, and, except for the purpose of pawing, are just as serviceable as those more costly gems that come from Brazil; while glass ornaments artistically colored are scarcely distinguishable from rubies, emeralds, opals, and other genuine articles of jewelry.

The quality of lace is not as important as the quantity, while the absence of a necklace is not observed if the corsage is sufficiently low to bring in other attractions. The secret of padding lean women out to graceful proportions is well understood; how to make obesity look slim requires a more scientific and artistic effort. It can be done, however, by absence of underclothes and great compression.

If the occasion is to be one to which large numbers are invited, it is well for the class to whom we are addressing this advice to go early, and if the opportunity presents itself, it may be hinted that as an intimate friend of the family you are expected to assist in the entertainment.

If distinguished guests are present, hover around them, address them as often as possible, and in the most perfect manner known that they are old and treasured friends with whom you are upon terms of great intimacy.

During the early part of the evening, as guests are arriving, allow no chance to pass of recognizing all among them that are important for their wealth and social position, particular attention being given to those who have elegant homes, and who are likely to entertain during the season.

If you dance or prom

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In Our Next!

THE SERIAL BEAUTIFUL, Drifting to Ruin; OR, THE MILLS OF THE GODS.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "DID SHE SING?" "SOWING THE WIND," "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "VIALS OF WRATH," ETC., ETC.

Using a rarely beautiful girl, poor but proud, who insnares men's hearts as the flower insnares the bee, as a central figure in a group of fine characters in high life, there flows from the pen a story so full of the enchantment of love, daring ambition and the fierce fire of a woman's desperate game, that we have a

Drama in Domestic Life

of a nature to enchain an almost impatient attention, so deeply must it arouse the reader's feeling and sympathies. In plot the work is quite a new departure, and in detail unfolds, chapter by chapter, such a limning of hearts, passions and traits as betray both the author's consummate knowledge of men and women and her admirable tact as story-teller.

Marion, the Beautiful Siren, and
Madge, the Purest of the Pure,
Effie, the Angel of the Hospital,
Hugh St. Morse, the Wronged Husband,
Carroll, the Deceived and Deceiving,
Lisle, the Bad and the Good,
are *dramatis personae* of clear-cut and signal excellence, whose various and diverse characters, in the conflict of an almost tragic and most singular series of events, give to the story very striking and effective conditions. The romance will add measurably to the author's popularity, and by her large circle of admirers be received enthusiastically.

Albert W. Aiken Again!

We have in hand, to follow Mrs. Crowell's notable serial novel, a new work of characteristic novelty in person, plot and story, from the pen of the author of "Bronze Jack," "Fresh of Frisco," etc., etc. It is equally a romance of adventure, legal rascality, personal achievement and love—of deepest interest and distinguished by that delightful *flavor* which renders Mr. Aiken's productions so popular and acceptable.

And letters continue to come, day after day, underpaid in postage. When each mail turns up a number of letters marked "due 3c," "due 6c," etc., it is pretty evident that correspondents are either very careless or *design* to cheapen the cost of correspondence at the publishers' expense. Which?

"It declined," says a contributor, "will you kindly say why?" A request often made but almost uniformly "declined with thanks." We hitherto have explained how impossible it is for an editor to give reasons. He may have a dozen reasons wholly independent of literary merit, for not accepting—which he cannot explain; or, if he rejects a contribution because of its want of proper merit, to give reasons is to add to his paid duties the unpaid office of critic and teacher. Only in rare instances can he depart from the necessary rule to give no reasons for his failure to accept story, sketch or poem.

Sunshine Papers.

The Lady.

"ARE there" asks a cynical old bachelor, "any ladies left in the world? There are plenty of upstart misses, plenty of young women and old women; but are there any *ladies*? If so, where are they? How shall they be discovered?"

Yes, we believe there are a few ladies in the world—a few *perfect ladies*; as few, perhaps, as there are perfect gentlemen. And when the doubting questioner propounded so grave a proposition, we think he meant no disrespect, by his fashion of wording it, to the good name woman which has been honorably used by the most perfect man who ever trod the earth, in His address to His mother. The unbelieving bachelor would simply distinguish between the great mass of womankind and those, the flower of their sex, who have inherited or cultivated those graces of demeanor and character supposed of old to belong only to the female of royal descent—the titled lady. And while, now, those who—to paraphrase Tennyson's words—can "bear without abuse the good old name of gentlewoman"—The Lady—are indeed something hard

to find, their home, when discovered, may as often prove a cottage as a palace.

Not position, nor wealth, nor birth, can make a lady, though all of these may, and should, conduce to that gentle and noble deportment which ranks the gentleman superior to her ordinary feminine sisterhood. Whether the wife of a plowman or the wife of a lord, a dweller in a mountain cottage or a presidential palace, but able to read and write or familiar with all the accomplishments of modern learning, veined with the blood of royalty or the blood of slavery, the lady is a lady "for a' that," and discoverable to all who know a *perfect lady* when they meet her. I have heard it often said of a negro woman, who, in her youth, and the long-ago days of Northern slave-holding, was the property of my ancestors, that she "was one of the most *perfect ladies* who ever trod the earth;" and I have in my mind, now, a lady of education, refinement and wealth in regard to whom every one says—no matter how long or how short the time they have known her—"Is she not a *perfect lady*?"

So you see, you cynical man, that there are some ladies—ladies easily recognizable as such—in existence; and you may look for her, everywhere—not that you will find her everywhere—until you discover her and lose your bachelor heart.

In church—she never stares about her; never turns to look back; never whispers, nor yawns, nor fidgets; never exchanges recognitions with her friends during the time of service. She does not come late, in order to display her apparel, nor make a *furor* by rustling up the aisle and into the pew; nor does she insist upon having a certain seat, to the inconvenience of others. She is careful not to attire herself for the worship of God as if going to a promenade concert or a ball, not to wear anything so strikingly peculiar or gay as to distract the attention of her neighbors from the solemnity of the service. When she leaves church it is not after spending a half-hour in gossip and small-talk, neither is it with disdainful disregard of all those members of the same communion less richly dressed than herself and more lowly in station; for all she will have a kindly smile, a graceful greeting; and for those whose families have suffered from sickness or bereavement, an interested inquiry.

If among the women who are shopping, the *perfect lady* is sought, she will not be discovered giving the clerks needless trouble, talking loudly, speaking impatiently and dictatorially to those who serve her. She will never be heard "beating down" a shopman; she will never be caught buying coarse and cheap underwear at the expense of showy hats and dresses; she will never neglect the smiling "If you please," or "May I trouble you?"; she will never forget the kindly "Thank you," for services rendered.

When traveling, the *perfect lady* is plainly dressed; she makes no show of jewelry, she is quiet-mannered; she does not fuss, nor worry, nor talk loud, nor betray excitability, irritability, nor selfishness; she does not stare at people, nor allow her children, her servants, or her pets, to inconvenience or annoy any one; she accepts favors gratefully, she declines them graciously.

As a guest, the lady is chary of giving unnecessary trouble; she consults the rules and regulations of the house, she shows her appreciation of every effort to give her pleasure; as a hostess, her aim is to have her guests well acquainted and enjoy themselves thoroughly; she neglects no effort within her power and means to please and entertain them, and she sees to it that while they are in her home their preferences are consulted, their tastes considered, their views and prejudices respected.

Among her children, the *perfect lady* is mother, friend, confidante, playmate, adviser; she always speaks softly, and gently, and truthfully; she is just and merciful, respected and revered, and her word is law. With her servants it is the same; she is always mistress of the situation, but mistress in so kindly and gentle a fashion that they are scarcely conscious of being ruled; and she is not mistress, alone, but kindest friend and counselor.

The *perfect lady* is always revered and beloved of the poor; she is never haughty, never arrogant, never selfish, never cruel; she makes no boast of her wealth; she never holds herself superciliously superior to those whose advantages have been less than her own. She is low-spoken, she is glad to please, she is *always the same*. The true lady is the *Christian woman*—using the term in no sectarian sense, but its broadest and its fullest; for she who can rightfully lay claim to the graces of perfect ladylikeness is she whose every thought and act is an exponent of that golden rule the adoption of which, as a life-principle, is a hundred times more sure a sign of a noble Christianity than the devotion to any creed or the repetition of any confession.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

FOR OTHERS' SAKE.

I THINK one of the most beautiful little incidents I have come across in my random readings is that of the old man who was planting some trees, and who answered the remark, "Why should you do this when you cannot expect to live to see the trees attain their growth?" with the following: "I plant them that others may enjoy their shade, just as those did who planted these for you and me." A beautiful speech, but a more beautiful deed. Working for others' sake.

This brought to my mind another incident, most homely perhaps, but no less true, and just as unselfish. Some people detest certain kinds of food, and I have known one person so affected by the scent of beets or onions as to almost cause a faintness to come over her, if she prepared them for the table. Many have asked her why she ever has these things in her house if they are so disagreeable. "Why, because others like them; those who do like them shall not be deprived of their treat, even if they affect me so strangely." A good woman, that, and if she is unselfish in little things will she be selfish in great?

Still another incident comes before me, but it is a case where one is *not* willing to do a little deed of kindness for another's sake. The deaf are very sensitive and are apt to feel slights perhaps more keenly than others. I have a friend afflicted in that manner. She prefers to have people write their communications rather than about them. One selfish being never visits my friend, giving as an excuse that it is such a trouble to write down all he would say, and that he is sick of it. I call him selfish because he is not willing to do one little act of kindness to make the burden of another's life less hard to bear. And "he is not dead yet," as the saying is, and there may be a thousand and one things happen to him whereby he may become a burden upon others. What if it be a trouble?

Are we expected to jog along at ease and

never have anything but our own way? Must we never put ourselves out for others' sake? I should think that one who can make another's life run smoother in the grooves would deem it a pleasure and not a task to do so. What if there be no reward accompanying it; kindness, goodness, thoughtfulness, unselfishness—like virtue—are their own reward. You will not repent working for others' sake.

Two of the happiest companions that ever formed a friendship for each other were one who was partially deaf and the other totally blind. It was almost a lesson to see these two together, for it taught one how a person could be happy even though he were deprived of one of his senses. They may have thought it strange that these two should form such a friendship, yet there was nothing so singular in it. Both had an affliction, each felt for and pitied the other—not only pitied, but helped him; one was ears to the deaf, the other, eyes to the blind. As others gradually drew away from these two they naturally came closer together. At first it seemed a duty for them to do what they could to make life sweeter for the other; then that duty grew into a pleasure, and where others might have been discontented under infirmities, they found contentment and happiness; and in ministering to each other's afflictions, and striving to make them lighter, they seemed to forget their own. And we might be of more use in this world were we to live for others' sake.

"And do we not live for others' sake?" Maybe, sometimes. But is it not done too often for the sake of some reward? Would we as tenderly nurse and care for those who had naught to leave behind them when dead, and no means to pay for comforts while living, as we would one who was possessed of an ample fortune which would come to us at his decease? Are we as willing to do a favor for those who can pay us only in thanks as for those who will reward us with money?

Are we as glad to welcome the simple as the grand? Do we treat homespinn as well as broadcloth, if the former lacks the greenbacks? Don't we show by our words, and in our actions, the difference between the stations held by the rich and poor? In passing through the streets do we not bow low to the one who has a large account at the bank and feel it an honor to do so, while we pass working men and women with a slight nod, as though we were almost ashamed to acknowledge such acquaintances?

But all this is *not* living for others; it is acting from an interested motive; we expect to reap some benefit from it; the point is too thin not to be discovered. We are not working for others' sake, but for the sake of our own selfish selves.

EVE LAWLESS.

What I Know of America.

BY WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

THE ICELANDERS IN AMERICA.

HISTORY is without doubt the greatest invention of the age, and the noble historian who, for the benefit of the future, describes correctly, and without bias, the epochs of the past, and although he is hard up, wouldn't tell a lie for money, is one of the grandest heroes of all time. Make much of him; don't step off the sidewalk to get by him; take him to your homes; invite him to your hospitable table, and do not allow him to ask you twice for the loan of a five-dollar bill.

I was naturally led into this train of thought in looking backward over the preceding portion of this history. When I was a boy I used to be licked for telling the truth so much, and I thought it wasn't fair; that it might not be things which I hadn't ought to tell, but because it was the truth, anyway. The trouble of most histories is too much sameness; there is so little originality in them that if you take up any two histories of the same land you will find them quite alike, and therefore monotonous. Originality is one of the main features of our celebrated family and its records.

Far to the north of England, pretty nearly in the same place where it is now, in those early times laid the little island of Iceland, washed by the frozen waves of the Aurora Borealis or Arctic Sea, which surrounded it pretty much entirely. This island was the seat of all the cold weather that flowed down over Europe, and made even kings blast their eyes and blame their nose.

The inhabitants were a hardy set, according to Hardee's tactics, and lived on cold weather and fish. They were fearless and strong, with manners so entirely free from the conventionalities of courtly life that they didn't know anything about it. They were not happy unless they were half-frozen, and always ate ice-cakes for tea and boiled their coffee cold. They originally had winter twelve months out of the year, and so, to have more months of winter in the year, they made each year have fourteen months.

About a hundred years after the downfall of the Northern in America a colony of Icelanders by some means learned that railroad lands could be entered cheap in Vineland, and concluded to emigrate here. As there was not wood enough on their island to build a vessel, they embarked on an iceberg which was en route for the West, and landed in the vicinity of Boston in 927 Anna Domino, where they soon began to settle—everything except their debts, and built the ancient and renowned city of Iceopolis in course of time.

These people were a cold, classical set, and the old documents say that, as the winters before were remarkably mild they brought with them much of the extremely cold weather of their frozen island, and made the winters so severe that most of the old resident Indians froze off. The present Boston winters, in a measure, are owing to their introduction by the Icelanders.

They introduced ice-cream into this country and thrived so greatly that they established mint-julep factories with ice in them.

They loved cold weather so well they always selected the freezingest days to promenade or stroll on the present Common—the only thing really common about Boston—and then it was thronged. On the coldest night the Icelandic youth and maid leaned over the front gate or sat upon the step when their warm words of love and affection would freeze as soon as they were uttered unless they were caught quick; and if the maid was anxious to have her swain take his hat and his departure at 11 o'clock she didn't let the fire go out first as they do now, but she put more wood in the stove, and the old man never had to growl much about his wood bill.

This was one of the grandest old colonies that ever set up housekeeping on our shores. The people were a fearless and simple race and without aristocracy—the richest man could hold his head just as high as the poorest one among them and put on just as much style if he was so disposed. Their hospitality was great; they would have entertained our royalty if you had watched out for the dog and

knocked at their door, and they would have been glad to see you, coming as you would have done from the present day. Object was no money to them; they did not care any more for a dollar than you do for a hundred cents. If they would borrow a chew of tobacco they would return it as soon as they were through with it, and a man who was so unselfish as to lend money never could have struck a better lot of clinging friends.

By law the men dressed alike and the women likewise; this was righteous and just. Otherwise whenever a man borrowed another's coat they would have known it to the spot; and it also prevented one woman dressing better than another and getting her face scratched.

Among the many heroic deeds and achievements which they performed, and which will live in the shining pages of history forever, was the introduction of beans, which, before the Western World had rolled on oblivious of. Other conquerors have humbled empires, dethroned tyrants, and wasted the people, but what conqueror ever before furnished the beans? Hunt in your soup, and if you should happen to find one throw yourself into a musing attitude, and give thanks to the worthy Icelanders, and also to your landlady for introducing a bean into your bean soup. Has not the Boston baked beans, in company with Boston philosophy, come to be world-wide, until now everybody knows beans? and if it had not been for beans what would we know now?

They found the summers longer than in Iceland, and they were very severe on them along in the earlier years of the colony; they were greatly alarmed for fear they wouldn't keep, but looked for themselves to spoil; so, to prevent such a catastrophe, they stored vast quantities of ice, and during the hot weather they ate nothing but ice and dwelt in ice-houses. As a consequence, their birds worked entirely on odes to Winter and Beautiful Snow, but, fortunately for us, none of them are now extant.

They occupied the country about a hundred and fifty years, and then were wiped out utterly by the hordes of Northern Esquimaux, who came down on a whaling expedition, in a series of battles, for the E's in those days were very warlike, but the warm weather drove them back to their own holes in the ice, and the Indians came in again with a hop, skip and a jump.

Topics of the Time.

The Paris fashion is to have no bridesmaids, the brothers, cousins, and other relatives and friends of the bride who are less than twelve years of age taking their place, and waiting on the bride throughout the wedding-day. They dress alike, usually in red or blue velvet, with silk stockings.

It is estimated that there are in the United States over 400,000 railway cars of all kinds and 16,000 engines. These engines and cars, in traveling over the roads, lose annually between four and five millions of nuts. These will weigh over 1,500,000 pounds, and their cost is between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Christina, the new Queen of Spain, is very girlish-looking, a pretty, fair-haired, shy and slender young lady, with a pleasant smile and amiable manners. Her character is frank, her temperament gay," said King Alphonso, in speaking recently of his betrothed. "She is resolute, she unites all the qualities of the best types of the Viennese, for which I have much sympathy."

The Belcher is now the deepest mine on the Continent. The incline has reached a perpendicular depth of 3,000 feet, and starting from a level of 900 feet, makes its dip at an angle that requires 160 feet in order to make 100 feet in perpendicular depth. The mine is said to be in excellent order, and if ore be found on the new level it can be brought to the surface with extreme facility.

Standing Bear, the Ponca chief who has been visiting Boston, is described as a man of immense frame and imposing presence. He has peculiarly sad eyes and a worn and despondent aspect; but as he speaks he grows earnest, and his face lights up. Brighteyes, the girl who interprets his speeches, is remarkably intelligent. She is twenty-four years old, and intends to study at Wellesley College.

It has been commonly supposed that China, in its densest portions, embraced more inhabitants within a square mile than any other country on the globe, but some of the best judges put the population of China proper at not over 300,000,000, and say that if the country were as densely populated as some parts of Europe it would readily support a population of 500,000,000. Famines, rebellions and foreign wars have kept down the natural increase in the population.

It is said that Krantz, the German state executioner who beheaded Hoedel last summer, besieged by fashionables in search of "relics." They came to him in state, with their coaches and liveried equipages, in search of hair-cuttings of criminals, bloody handkerchiefs and napkins, a glove, or what not. One would think that the days of George Selwyn, who used to see all the executions in London and Paris, and had the best collection of hangmen's tools in all Europe, had not passed away.

Physicians here claim that a great deal of the larger beer is poisonous, because the glucose put into it is formed from corn-meal and impure sulphuric acid. If the acid were pure, the glucose, they admit, would not be injurious; but the impure acid is naturally much cheaper than the pure, and serves their purpose so much better in prematurely ripening the beer that they would employ it, even if it were dearer. Some of the physicians, who say that they have analyzed various beers, maintain that it is all more or less poisonous from the cause named.

The world's production of sugar has grown to enormous proportions. Brazil produces 400,000,000 pounds, the British colonies 600,000,000, and the Dutch colonies 400,000,000. Beet-root sugar is produced in France to the enormous aggregate of 900,000,000 pounds, in Germany 700,000,000, and in Russia 500,000,000. The amount of cane sugar produced in all countries is now 5,000,000,000 pounds, and of beet-root sugar 2,000,000,000; grand total of raw sugar produced in the whole world 7,000,000,000 pounds, more than double that produced twenty-five years ago.

During the late "break" in the stock market, the lambs, as all greedy, unsophisticated outsiders are now dubbed in Wall street, lost, it is estimated, from \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000 by their redundant credulity. The lambs are invariably buyers on margins—if they should buy outright, they would not be lambs—and generally, when their margins have been exhausted once or twice, they cannot make them good, so that they are obliged to stand helpless and see their last chance disappear. What they seem unable to understand is, that under the most favorable circumstances, they have no reasonable prospect of gain with their paltry hundreds or thousands, while matched against the wolves' controlling millions. But they have the passionate faith of gamblers, and also the fatuity of gamblers, who learn nothing and forget everything while the mercenary mania possesses them. It might be thought that their late experience would teach them a lesson. But it won't. The lambs, and, indeed, all men who hope to make money irregularly, never learn by experience. They blindly worship Fortune, and believe in her implicitly, however often she may smite them.

Readers and Contributors.

Accepted: "Lines for an Album," "The Bottle Imp," "The Fairy Circle," "The Goulin of Anjou," "Pomona Rocks," "Ghosts of San Francisco," "A Saffron Eye," "Changed," "The New Man," "An Eye for a Kiss," "Spiritus Mear," "Not a Genius," "The Spotted Pheasant," "The Compliments of the Season," "Judge Boomer's Boom."

Declined: "The Ashford Tragedy," "Farewell to My Friends," "Meg," "Snowed in Tales," "The Mills of the Gods," "My Program," "My Mistake," "Joe versus Eli," "P. E. G. In and Out," "The Brownie Nest," "A Telescope for Two," "Spontaneous," "Charley Lover's Lay Out," "The Nailed on Silk," "The Compliments of the Season," "Brown Hair or Black."

ZAIDEE. Byron never was married to the countess. ONLY LISTEN. See Christmas Stories in next number.

ROYAL KEEPER. Cannot now answer. Ask your minister.

CONSTANT READER. The 15th of August, 1880, was Saturday.

JANE SMYTHE. We have no "regular terms." See article in No. 500.

MISS INA. Send "poem" to St. Nicholas Magazine. It pays for such matter.

W. C. C. Any bookseller will supply "Ivanhoe," Step into Estes and Lauriat's.

VICAR. Joe Phenix is not one of the "Dick Talbot" series. It is a City Land and Detective story. Address Mr. Aiken, through our care.

CHESTER. Always use black ink for MSS. These "fancy" inks are the compositor's abomination. Also use small letter or commercial note-paper as the best size for "copy."

MYSTERIEUX. Visit Macy's store and you'll see any number of things admirable for presents.—Cannot use sketch. It is rather crude as to composition, but in story well conceived.

GOPHER JOHN. Dexter's best accepted time, 2,174, has been beaten by several horses. It probably is true that horse-speed is increasing. Goldsmith Maid has scored 2:14; Rarus 2:13; and St. Julien 2:12.

YOUNG MAN. Never settle in any place—and especially in a new country—until you have visited the spot and investigated all its conditions. Nebraska has many a growing young town worthy of your notice.

D. D. We know of but two or three biographies of Kit Carson, the elder. Kit Carson, the young one, we do not understand to be any relative of Old Kit. The lists of books you ask for have been sent.

GIPSY MAID. We know no more what makes the hair black, brown, flaxen, golden, red, etc., than why the eye is vari-colored. It is sometimes due to what is known as "temperament," but why the capillaries should secrete different-colored fluids no one can say.

MAME. If the "widow" is a friend of your friend, and to refuse to call upon her is to risk offending him, are you not straining a friendship unnecessarily? It ought to be your privilege and pleasure to accept the hospitalities of his home, otherwise there cannot be perfect confidence between you.

SIMPSON. St. Nicholas is supposed to have been a bishop of Myra—dying about the year 333. He was first adopted as patron saint by the boys and girls of Holland and Flanders, who, believing that he would visit them on Christmas Eve, hung at his feet their shoes and stockings to receive his gifts for their good behavior.

ADA. It seems to us your moods are rather the result of indifference than of actual laziness or incapacity to learn. It is not your fault, as you are those by Proctor or Dr. Lord you would have an interest and ambition aroused that would give your mind a decided impetus. At any rate get and read attentively such books as will be likely to interest. Real school study may be dry and repellent, but there is, after all, another kind of study by deeply interesting books. Let your mind have acquaintance with the right kind of people which will avail to well qualify you for life.

JULIA MORRILL. When a gentleman calls upon a lady, he hands his card to the servant to be given to the lady for whom he has asked. It is not "the thing" for him to hand the lady herself, his card, or to leave it upon the card-basket—unless he has called to see her. Her character is frank, her temperament gay," said King Alphonso, in speaking recently of his betrothed. "She is resolute, she unites all the qualities of the best types of the Viennese, for which I have much sympathy."

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Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

No man ever possessed more blandishments with a woman than Sam.

Sam refused to talk with any one except the fair young tract-distributor who visited the prison.

"Hang me," said one of the keepers, "if he ain't turned white-livered already. He knows what's comin', an' he's goin' to get ready in time."

"Sister Agnes," as the lady was called by the prisoners, was astonished at the respect and attentions which she received from Clark. She was also astonished that a man who appeared so much of a gentleman could be charged with such crimes.

She was young, and though she had undertaken the distribution of tracts in one of the worst prisons in the world, she had little knowledge of the actual depth of human depravity.

To come in contact with such a gentlemanly man as Clark appeared in all his conversation with her, and, moreover, to find one so contrite about his sins, was something not less agreeable than rare in her prison experience.

Clark took all the tracts she brought, and he talked most glibly with her about doctrinal points.

"Sir," she said one day, "you interest me more and more every time I see you. I have been telling my Sunday school class about you."

"Indeed," said Clark, "you held me up as a terrible warning, I suppose."

"Well, sir," said the woman, apologetically, "I told them that you were charged with great crimes, that you were contrite, and hoped to be forgiven. I urged them to profit by such an example of turning to the way of salvation."

They talked over together, until the woman began to look upon Clark as a brand which she had herself plucked from destruction. She began to defend him to the keepers and beyond the prison walls.

One day Clark said to her:

"You are my only friend on earth. Will you do me a service?"

"Bring me some soap. An' so do we."

"What do you want it for?"

"To kill the horrible rats which run all over me at night."

"It is against the rules."

"The rules are cruel. How can I read your tracts and books when the rats torment me?"

"I will bring you soap, if you will be so good as to thank you. Oh, you will be blessed in your good and self-sacrificing work among prisoners."

When she went away Clark said:

"Now, then, of the law, do your worst. I shall be prepared for triumph or defeat."

On another corridor was the cell of Sam. Everybody who came to the prison wanted to see him.

"Barnum would make me exhibit you, Sam," said one of the keepers, "your fame has gone far and wide."

"I wish I was out of here," replied Sam. "I don't like to have people look at me in a prison."

"Why not? They're civil to you."

"Oh, yes, but that don't do it. They point at me an' say all sorts of things 'bout that murder and robbery."

"Most of them seem to think you innocent," responded the keeper. "An' so do we."

"Why don't they let me out?" Mr. Worden would go my bail."

"Well, you see they can't take bail for murder, which is the charge in your case."

"But you've got the right one now—Clark."

"Yes, we think so. The way'll be this. As soon as the district attorney is satisfied with the proof against Clark he'll go into court and move to enter a *nolle prosequi* in your case, and you'll be let out."

"Well, I wish he would hurry up with his *nolle*."

"You'll be the principal witness against Clark, when his trial comes on."

"Sam's face became serious."

"I hate to have him hung, but I s'pose I must."

"Or hang yourself," warningly said the keeper.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SAM'S SAILOR CHAMPION.

DANGER and adventure seemed to follow Sam Sam wherever he went.

After much delay and difficulty Mr. Worden had succeeded in obtaining the release of Sam from the Toms. The indictment against Sam was legally disposed of, but Mr. Worden was obliged to become bail for his appearance at both the trial of Clark and of the gang.

"From him," said the official, "will come the most important links of evidence in both cases. Justice will fail without his assistance."

Mr. Worden took Sam home with him, and gave him some pocket money.

"Do as you please," he said, "but look out that you are not kidnapped. You know a great deal about some people, and their friends might try to put you out of the way."

It was a fact that the most determined efforts were being made to save Lacy, and the different members of his gang understood it. They had been scattered, broken up, and most of them apprehended, but there were others still at liberty who were exerting every nerve to save those in prison.

When Lacy was released of Sam, he said:

"They expect to use that youngster as a witness, do they? Well, we'll see."

His countenance looked dark, and he shook his head significantly.

During the afternoon Sam got tired of staying indoors, and concluded that he would walk out a short distance.

"It's daylight," he said, "an' the streets are full of people. Nobody could hurt me at such a time."

He did not intend to go far, but he became interested in the passing carriages and crowds of people, and wandered on without thinking.

After awhile somebody caught him by the arm, and said:

"Why, Sam Sam!"

"Charlie Miller!"

"It's me."

"Why, you're all dressed up," said Sam, observing that Charlie's appearance was entirely changed.

"So I am," said the boy, proudly. "We're somebody now, and live at a hotel."

"Does your mother live at a hotel now?" asked Sam, in wonderment. "Is she doing the washin' there?"

Charles curled his lip scornfully.

"She'll never wash for anybody any more," he cried. "Father has come home a captain, and owner of a ship."

"Gee," said Sam. "Come, I'm no fool."

Charles now told the whole strange and romantic story of his father's going away, long absence, and final return.

"If you don't believe what I say, come round to the hotel on Fourth avenue, and see for yourself. Mother and father want to see you, anyhow."

"I'll go," cried Sam.

He went to the hotel, and was soon ushered into a fine suit of rooms.

His welcome from Mrs. Miller and Walter was most affectionate. As soon as Captain Miller saw him, he said:

"I thought as much. You are the very boy who carried my valise."

"The very same," said Sam, laughing. "You paid me well, too."

Then he told all about his own troubles and adventures.

"But," said he, "I've found a great friend in Mr. Worden. He's going to send me to school, and then set me up in business. I live at his house, on Fifth avenue, now. It's a fine place, full of lookin' glasses, pictures, an' all kinds of nice things."

"It ain't as nice as our ship," said Walter.

Then they all laughed at Walter's remark, and Sam promised, at his first opportunity, to go on board.

the thieves for their success in kidnapping children. It was thought by Lacy's friends in New York that, with the assistance of these men, Sam Sam could be easily put out of the way.

"What plan are you goin' to take, Bill?" asked Pete.

"I'm puzzled to know what to do. I thought if we got a chance to talk to him, we might let him be officers, and hurry him off before he could make any trouble."

"Our chance is improvin' the longer he stays in there. It's growin' dark now."

"When he comes out," said Bill, who was the leader in the business, "we'll follow at his heels, an' the first chance we get, clip him over the head an' make off."

"That's risky," said Pete; "there's so many people in the streets."

"True," replied Bill; "but don't you notice what a hurry they are all in? These 'ere New Yorkers—men and women—always go on a half-run, as if the devil was after 'em."

"They don't notice much, that's a fact."

"Well, then, I think we could knock this 'ere kid over, an' they'd not stop to look at him before we could run out of sight."

"There he is," said Pete, as Sam emerged from the hotel. "He's in a hurry, now."

"I'm sorry I said so late," said Sam, as he walked briskly up the street.

"Now, follow," said the ruffian, Bill, "an' knock him the first chance."

"All right," returned Pete.

Sam went up two blocks from the hotel, and then turned toward a cross street toward Fifth avenue. The street he had selected was one with houses on only one side, while the other was the long side wall of Gilmore's Garden. By some chance, too, he went to the walk which skirts this wall.

"By all that's lucky," said Pete, "he's taken the very street that suits our plan."

They ran over to the same side.

Sam was not a timid boy, but he hastened his steps, and felt apprehensive, because he knew there was danger to him in the streets at that hour. However, he saw only a block off, the hundreds of lights in Madison Square, and he felt half-ashamed of his fears.

The ruffians drew nearer.

Sam heard the footsteps and looked back.

"I don't like those fellows comin' on me in that way," he said.

At the same time Bill and Pete became aware that there was a man close behind them.

"It's now or never," said Bill.

"Suppose we let this chap behind pass us," suggested Pete.

He won't do it," replied Bill, excitedly. "Every time we hold up, he does the same. I don't know what he means. I wish we could give him a touch of the knuckles for followin'."

"This is the best spot," said Pete; "in a minute the kid will be in the light of Madison Square."

They advanced rapidly upon Sam, and both were on the eve of striking him, when each received a tremendous blow alongside of their heads.

"Run, Sam, for your life," cried the voice of Captain Miller; "these men want to kill you."

Sam fled like a deer.

The men, though for the moment stunned, sprung up and dashed off in another direction.

Captain Miller was left victorious and alone. The whole affair had been so quick that the few passers did not know what it meant.

As he turned to go back to the hotel, Captain Miller could not exclaim:

"It was lucky I showed that boy. They would have killed him, without doubt. Well, I shall have more news for Mrs. M. and the boys."

Sam did not stop running until he got to Mr. Worden's door. When he related what had befallen him, Mr. Worden said:

"It is fortunate for you that your friend Captain Miller came up. You must stay indoors for the present."

"I won't stir a peg unless some one goes with me—it ain't safe," replied Sam.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 503.)

MY AMBITION.

BY WALTER C. CLARKE.

Give me rather than bright rubies,
Or the dross of human wealth,
Something to me far more precious—
The enjoyment of good health.

Rather than all worldly pleasures,
Or the pageantry of fame,
To be simply pure and noble—
Let this be my highest aim.

Of all gifts to mortals given,
Of the blessings God has sent,
Give me this above all others—
The calm joy of sweet content.

And though clouds o'er me should lower,
Though my skies be not all blue,
This, my heart's one fond desire—
May to me my friends be true.

Strange Stories.

THE DEMON ROBBER.

A TALE OF PARIS.

BY AGILE PENNE.

It was just after the Restoration, and the streets of the great French capital were most decidedly unsafe. Foot-pads and robbers of both high and low degree infested them, and it was really dangerous to walk about with valuables on one's person after a certain hour.

The streets were badly lighted, and the police force was none of the best.

And then, in the midst of these troublesome times, appeared a foot-pad—a minion of the demon, who came in such a wonderful guise that in a very short time all Paris rung with the news of his exploits.

In brief, to convert the vague, uncertain rumors into a comprehensive statement, it was openly declared that Satan in person, hoofs, horns and tail, had taken to robbing in the streets of the mercenary French capital.

Twenty or more had declared that they had seen him, and declared too that the interview had been more or less to their sorrow, for the Devil had taken it into his head, after frightening his victims into insensibility, to investigate the contents of their pockets.

It was really a wonderful freak of his Satanic Majesty, and the gay world of Paris at first was not at all disposed to accept the tale.

They looked upon it as the mere coinage of some drunkard's brain, but when a noble lady, well known to society, returning from a friend's house to her own, the distance a hundred yards only, unattended, testified that she was suddenly confronted by a gigantic figure, that seemed to rise out of the very earth, robed in a dark cloak which he threw off, revealing the well-known figure that painters from time immemorial have made familiar to the eye, puffing a hot flame from his mouth which seemed to scorch her very eyebrows, and in hollow tones cried: "Are you ready?"—was it a wonder that she fainted? And when she came to her senses she found that the Prince of Darkness had, in the most dextrous manner, relieved her of all her valuables and then vanished, leaving behind him an extremely strong smell of brimstone.

Of course this was all nonsense, so some people said—a woman's fantasy produced by over-exposure to heat. It was merely a clever trick of a clever robber, and that was all.

But the Parisian world sang a different tune when the dashing Count de Morlac told his tale of his encounter with the fiend.

The count, after passing nearly all the night in a well-known gaming-house, where he had been extremely lucky, winning some three thousand francs, started about three o'clock in the morning for his hotel. His sporting friends had rallied him upon the danger of encountering the mysterious personage who assumed such a terrible appearance, but the count had laughed the advice to scorn. He was well armed, he said—had provided a brace of pistols expressly for the accommodation of the midnight prowler; and so, despite the remonstrance of the rest, he started; but not twenty steps from the door—as he related next day to his wondering friends, he encountered the fiend.

Although taken somewhat by surprise, for he had not expected to meet him quite so soon, the count at once drew his pistol, and as the mysterious being advanced, fired. And then, upon his word of honor as a gentleman, he declared he distinctly saw the bullet, which was an ex-

tremely large one, pass clear through the body of the specter, just as if it had been so much air, which of course it was, being but a shadowy thing from the other world, and strike against a stone house on the opposite side of the way.

Of course, after this convincing proof, that it was no mere mortal in disguise, but really a supernatural being that he was dealing with, it was no wonder that the count's courage forsook him and that he fainted.

When he recovered, he found himself minus his jewelry, minus the francs which he had so skillfully won at the gaming-table; in fact, minus everything valuable.

But, even after this convincing proof that it really was Satan in person who was roaming through the streets of Paris, there were plenty of people who doubted the story.

The chief of police was one, and he openly told the Count de Morlac that it was quite evident he had either been drinking freely or else had allowed his imagination to run away with him.

The count at once offered to wager a thousand francs with his excellency, the chief, that he would not dare to put ten thousand francs in his pocket and promenade a certain avenue from three to one, three nights in succession, without being guarded by secret police in disguise.

The chief, who was an obstinate, pig-headed brute, no more fit for his position than the lowest spy in the service, at once accepted the bet.

The first two nights he did have the police spies secreted in the neighborhood; the third night he did not, and the result was that he had not half traversed the avenue before a dark form sprang out from a doorway, a hand of iron, with talons like a wild beast, and almost red-hot to the touch, grasped him by the throat; there came a powerful puff of incense in his face, a strange, peculiar perfume which cripplered the magistrate at once.

When he recovered he found himself lying flat on his back, his pockets turned inside out, every valuable which he had upon his person gone, even to the rings upon his fingers, and as a convincing proof that he had indeed had an interview with his majesty of the hoofs and tail, there on his throat were the red marks where the claws of the fiend, hot from the realms below, had seared the flesh.

If it was not Satan, it was one of his imps, anyway!

About this time, just as Paris was really beginning to take the story of the Master of Evil had taken into his head to use the streets of Paris for a nightly promenade, and amuse himself by relieving belated wayfarers of their valuables, there came to the capital a young blade who had been in foreign parts in quest of his fortune. Guy Saint Blaire he called himself—a young spirit of an old Normandy family, with much more nobility than money.

Young Saint Blaire had sought for fortune in many a clime; in Africa he had found it not; the plains of Asia refused to yield it to him; the great prairie wastes of North and South America bestowed it not upon him, although he had done his best to deserve it, herding with the savages like a brother, living their life, sharing their food and using their weapons.

But now, in Paris, when he heard the story of this mysterious demon who bid fair to depopulate the streets of the great metropolis after nightfall, he said to himself: "My time has come!" and straightway he hastened to the chief of the police and with all the frank impudence of youth proposed to capture Monsieur Satan.

At first the chief was disposed to quiz the youth.

"Bah, it is ridiculous!" exclaimed the officer. "Try me; I can but fail, and if I fail, I ask nothing."

"And if you succeed?"

"I shall be a fat place under Government where I shall have very little to do and get well paid for doing it."

The chief reflected; after all there was no harm in making the trial, and so at last he consented.

Saint Blaire required a little assistance.

"I am your man," you understand, I have just come from the Isle of France, where I have a colossal plantation; I am rolling in wealth. A gold piece is no more to me than a sou to a fairly wealthy man. I carry upon my person, habitually, the sum of twenty or thirty thousand francs, and you have constantly warned me of the danger of being robbed that I run; but I am so rich that I heed it not. This must be my character, or Monsieur Satan will not be eager to make my acquaintance. This Parisian devil of yours is a curious fiend, mon sieur, since he appears only to care to make himself visible to people who have something to lose. They tell me that a poor man stands no chance, in the world, of seeing him."

The chief assented to the conditions; nay more—inspired by the young man's confidence he lent him his revolver, and so that he might appear in a creditable light.

Saint Blaire instantly became a lion; his society was courted; he had traveled; he had fought lions, tigers, Indians and all sorts of savage beasts; not only that, but he was so rich that he had no need to walk about with valuables on a dark corner and confront him was.

The young man carried out the character to the life; and in order to give Satan a fair chance he began to frequent the haunts of play.

And the fiend had his eye on him, too, and one night as Saint Blaire quitted a well-known resort, just after midnight, the Devil emerged from a dark corner and confronted him.

Then whiz went something through the air, and the first thing that Monsieur Satan knew there was a rope around his neck. Saint Blaire had lassoed him! Then, with a powerful jerk, he brought the midnight marauder down upon his face, sprawling.

Shot and steel Satan was provided against, for he wore a breast-plate. He had, too, a sponge saturated with a stupefying drug, an iron hand that he could heat red-hot, and he could spit fire after the juggler's trick.

But all his arts failed him now. Saint Blaire had him fast; his shouts brought assistance, and lo! an inspection revealed the Count de Morlac! The game was over now. The unlucky count got ten years at the galleys, Saint Blaire his position under government, and the demon was laid at last.

A Day at Woodcocking.

BY EDWARD WILLET.

HOWARD FLEMING had spent his summers at his uncle's, on the Hudson, from his thirteenth to his sixteenth year, and had become pretty well initiated into the mysteries and delights of swimming, boating and fishing. But he was also ambitious to try his hand at hunting, and with this object in view he obtained permission to visit his uncle during the woodcock season.

The woodcock is known to sportsmen by its pleasant gamey flavor, and those who have noticed the bird in the market cannot have failed to observe its peculiar long bill, which it uses for the purpose of extracting from the rich mud the fat and juicy worms and slugs on which it feeds. Woodcock are found in many parts of the State of New York, inhabiting swamps and the borders of muddy lakes, where they may be sought with dog and gun.

Howard Fleming had made the acquaintance of a professional woodcock hunter, Jake Demby by name, who had taken a liking to the boy, and had promised to show him how to shoot woodcock. As Jake Demby killed game for the markets, some sportsmen might call him a pothunter, but his work was fully as artistic as if he had pursued hunting merely for his own amusement. In fact, a man must be a thorough sportsman to become a successful woodcock hunter. He must be intimately acquainted with the habits and haunts of the game he seeks, must be a good wing shot, and must have a well-trained dog. These requisites Jake Demby possessed, nearly in perfection.

Howard carried up from the city a light and well balanced double-barreled bird-gun, and a supply of powder, caps and number-eight shot.

This equipped, and furnished with a haversack full of provisions, he set out with Jake Demby before the sun was up.

The first hunting-ground they struck was a small swamp, not half a mile from the house of Mr. Fleming, Howard's uncle.

"We will hardly find anything here," said Howard.

"We will give the dog a chance, anyhow," replied Demby. "In you go on the other side of the swamp, and keep your eyes and ears open. I will take this side, and send Ponto in between us."

Howard soon reached his station, and looked with all his eyes, but did not believe that he would be able to see anything through the thick foliage. He heard Demby encouraging the dog, and then the whirring of wings, but he saw nothing. Crack! went one barrel of Demby's gun, and crack! went another, and "down charge!" was his order to the dog. Howard ran around, and saw his mentor loading his gun, while the dog crouched at his feet.

"Did you miss?" asked the boy.

"Not much," replied Demby, as he put on his caps. "Dead bird, Ponto!" Then he went ahead a few rods, and with the assistance of the dog, speedily discovered two fine, dead woodcock, which he transferred to his bag after Howard had admirably examined them.

"I saw no sign of a bird," said Howard.

"They rose on my side, but they might have risen on yours. You must stand a little off from the swamp, so that you will have a chance to see 'em when they rise. You may be sure that Ponto will fetch 'em out if they are in there, and all you have to do is to keep your eyes skinned. You must carry your gun on the full cock when the dog is at work, and the great point is to see quick and shoot quick, as well as to aim at the bird. Woodcocks are easy enough to hit, when you once get the knack of it. If you should happen to bring one down, don't holter or run after it, but stop and load up, and wait till the dog comes to you."

Ponto was sent in again, but the scouring of the swamp developed no more game, and the hunters had a good walk to another swamp. They were assigned to stations on each side, and the dog was sent in between them.

Howard had hardly reached his side, when he chanced to cast his eyes through an opening, down to the edge of the swamp, and there he saw a brown bird standing on a stump in the long bill, which it had just drawn out of the ooze. He knew that it was a woodcock, and was sure that it had not seen him, although he was scarcely a rod from it. It was his prey, and he meant to secure it. He raised his gun to shoot, for he deliberated a moment, and fired.

The bird did not even flutter. There was but little left of it to flutter. There was a hole in the mud, and a few feathers scattered about to tell of the exploit. But Howard set to work to reload his gun, conscious of having fairly bagged his quarry.

"Shoot anything?" shouted his friend.

"Killed a woodcock!" proudly replied the boy.

Demby came around with the dog, and both, when they saw what had been done, were supremely disgusted, though Ponto could only show his disgust by the incessant and unintelligent countenance, while the man used some very vigorous language, illustrated by inelegant adjectives.

"You shot him sittin'!" he said, "an' you've blowed him all to flinders. Six shillin' 'n' you've woodcocked me to thinkin' Now, look here, young feller; if I ever agin ketch you shootin' at a bird that ain't on the wing, you won't never get out with me no more."

It was true that the bird had been shattered, driven into the mud, and absolutely ruined. Howard was quite crestfallen at the result of his first effort, and took the lesson to heart.

Howard's first bird was left in its muddy grave, and he stationed himself at a little distance from the swamp, while the dog was sent in again.

This time he used his eyes and ears to some purpose. He heard the rustle of wings, and saw a bird rise fairly above the bushes on his side. It flew regularly and not rapidly, presenting a fair mark, but Demby fired at it and missed, while Howard was getting his gun to his shoulder. When the boy was ready to fire, he was so far away that he had no hope of hitting it, but he pulled trigger, and it fluttered to the ground.

Demby came around with the dog, picked up the bird, and congratulated his young companion as warmly as he had scolded him a little while previously. Howard was overjoyed. He had discovered that he could shoot a bird on the wing, and had learned a lesson from his first successful shot, as well as from his first failure.

This swamp was again searched, but without discovering any more birds, and the hunters were tramped to another. Here they had their noonday meal, and as Howard was ravenously hungry, his cold meat and bread had a better relish than any hot and well-ordered dinner he had eaten in a long time.

After their meal, during their lunch, they took their stations on each side of a narrow swamp, lined with thick bushes, through which meandered a small and sluggish brook. Here neither of them could see the other, and there was nothing for them to do but watch for the birds when Ponto, who had no business thoroughly, was sent in and went to work.

Here they were so close together that Howard could easily hear his companion when he told the dog to go on, and he knew that Ponto had his nose pointed toward a woodcock. So Howard almost held his breath as he waited for the rise of the bird.

It came so suddenly that it startled him. He heard the whirr of wings, but saw nothing that flew. But he also heard the crack of Demby's gun, and at the same moment felt such a sharp pain in his breast as caused him to utter an exclamation which did not lack much of being a cry.

"What is the matter?" asked Demby.

"I believe I am shot."

His companion came running around with Ponto, and looked at the boy's face.

"I guess you ain't much hurt," he said.</

